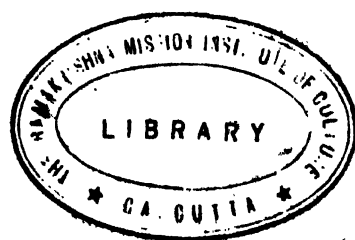


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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Or Awakened India

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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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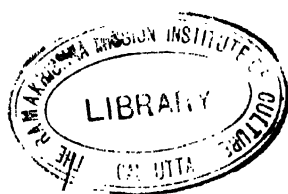
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SWAMI TRIGUNATITA.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



मायं वराप्रियोषत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

JANUARY, 1928.

No. 1.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

On Friday morning, Sreeman — came to me at my Patal-danga house and asked me to keep myself ready for a visit to the Holy Mother next day. I could not sleep that night. At last I was going to see her, after fourteen years' stay in Calcutta! Indescribable was the eagerness that filled my heart as the carriage conveyed me to the Udbodhan Office at Bagh-bazar, lifting Sumati from the Brahmo Girls' School on the way. Upstairs, we found Mother standing on the threshold of her shrine. As we saluted her, she enquired who I was. Sumati who had been known to her before, said that I was her elder sister. Mother looked at me and said: "Just see, mother, what a plight I am now in.—My sister-in-law, niece, Radhu, all are down with fever; and there is no one to attend on them. Just wait a little,—I am coming after washing my clothes." She returned in a while, and filling my hands with sweets, said: "Give some to daughter-in-law (i.e., Sumati) and take the rest yourself."

I could not stay longer that day,—Sumati had to return to her school. So we made our parting salutations to her and came away. "Come again," said Mother, as we departed.

But this short visit did not satisfy me.

I went again to see her on the 30th Magha, of the Bengali year 1317 (1910 A. D.). Mother had gone to Balaram Babu's house. But she soon returned. After I had saluted her, she asked me smilingly: "Whom have you come with?" "With a nephew," I replied. "Are you well?" she asked again. "Is daughter-in-law well? Why did you not come all these days?—I feared you were unwell." I felt surprised that she remembered me even after a single day's short meeting. My eyes filled with tears of joy.

Mother sat down on a bedstead and asked me to sit by her. I obeyed. She said affectionately: "I seem to have seen you many times before,—methinks I have known you long." "But," said I, "I came here only once for a few minutes." She smiled and praised our devotion highly. By and by many women devotees came; and it was delightful and wonderful to me to watch them intently and devoutly gazing at the smiling and affectionate face of the Holy Mother. Soon, however, word was brought that my carriage was at the gate. Mother got up, brought some *prasada* and holding it before my mouth, asked me to take it. Then, seeing that I was feeling too shy to eat it before the assembly, she said: "Do not feel shy. Take it." I took it in my hand. I saluted her. "Come again," she said, "can you go downstairs alone? Shall I come?" So saying she followed me to the stairs. I said: "Mother, I can go alone. You need not come." "All right," said she, "come one day in the morning."

That day my heart was full. How wonderful was her affection!

On the last day of Vaisakha, 1318, I went again to see Mother. As soon as I saluted her, she said: "You are come, mother! I was wondering why you did not come so long. What was the reason?"

Myself.—I was not in Calcutta,—I had gone to my father's place.

Mother.—Why does not daughter-in-law (Sumati) come? Is it because of her studies?

Myself.—No, my brother-in-law was not here.

Mother.—But she has been going to school:.....

A mat had been spread on the floor for Mother. She gave me a fan to cool myself with and said: "How hot! You have hurried to me just after meal,—now lie down near me." I hesitated to use her bed. But she said: "What of that? Lie down,—I tell you." So I lay down quietly by her. I

thought she was almost asleep when a few lady devotees and two nuns entered, and she asked without opening her eyes: "Is it Gauridasi?" "How could you know, Mother?" asked the younger nun. "Oh, I could feel," explained Mother and sat up presently. The younger nun said: "We had been to the Belur Math. Swami Premanandaji feasted us sumptuously. One cannot return unentertained while he is there." Mother rebuked her mildly for not wearing the vermilion mark on her forehead.

By and by Gauri-Mâ, the older nun, learnt all about me from Mother and requested me to go to her school to teach sewing to the girls. Accordingly, with Mother's permission, I went there one day. She received me very kindly and asked me to teach her school one or two hours daily. In spite of disabilities, I had to accede to her importunate request.

One afternoon, after the school was over, I came to Mother. It was a hot summer day and I was a little tired. I found Mother sitting among a crowd of lady devotees. On my saluting her, she looked at my face, and taking a fan from the top of a mosquito-curtain, began to fan me. She urged me to take off my jacket quickly so that the air might play on my body. I was greatly charmed by her affectionate solicitude, but also felt a little embarrassed at this marked attention to me, with every one looking on. I asked her repeatedly to hand over the fan to me, but she would not. "Let it be," she said, "just cool down a little." And she was not satisfied till I had taken some sweets and a glass of water which she had brought for me.

The carriage was waiting outside. I exchanged a few words with Mother and returned home.

The 18th of Sravana, 1318.—On that day I went to Mother with the intention of receiving *deekshâ*, initiation, from her, taking all necessary things with me. Going up, I found her deeply absorbed in the worship of Sri Ramakrishna. When the worship was over, Gauri-Mâ who had accompanied me, spoke to her about my intention. I also had a talk about it with Mother on a previous occasion. She asked me to spread an *âsana* (seat) on her left and sit down on it. I said that I had not that day bathed in the Ganges. But that did not matter since I had pure clothes on. I sat there with my heart throbbing wildly. All else were asked to leave the room. Mother then said to me: "Tell me what you got in dream." "Shall I write it down or speak it out?" I asked. "Speak out," she replied..... At the time of the Deeksha, Mother explained to me the mean-

ing of the *mantram* I had got in dream and asked me to repeat it first. She then gave me another *mantram* and said: "Next repeat this one and meditate." Before she explained the *mantram*, I found her meditating for a short while. As she gave me the *mantram*, my body began to shake and I began to cry I did not know why. She put a large mark of red sandal paste on my forehead.

Mother looked very grave all this time. At last she got up from her seat and asked me to repeat the *mantram*, meditate and pray for some time. When I had finished, I also got up and bowed down before Mother. As I raised myself, she blessed me, saying: "May you have devotion!" This her blessing has become the hope of my life.

(To be continued)

THE WAR OF IDEALS

BY THE EDITOR

Do we feel that the Orient, especially India, is just now the target of the determined attack of a most insidious form of Western materialism? It has been said that the motive power behind "Mother India" is a sinister anti-Indian organisation which set this woman already made notorious by her "Isles of Fear" to the writing of the book. This may or may not be true. But it cannot be denied that the book has been very cleverly exploited by the enemies of India. This political motive is obvious. But behind this there is another force of which this is but an effect and expression. This greater force is trying subtly to undermine the spiritual powers of the world and are seeking to render civilisation more and more secular and material. Naturally, therefore, this sinister power is launching its attacks against those who stand primarily for a spiritual outlook on life. The attack on India is an aspect of that original aggression. The West is deliberately seeking to dominate the world, not only politically and industrially, but also culturally. And no country in the world has to fear so much from this as India.

This aggressive materialism is not new born. It is as old as the birth of science. It has its roots in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We know what a virulent form it took in those times. Later on, however, it seemed to be slowly yielding to the truths of the spirit and science also did not

seem so destructive of religion. These were vain hopes. In one respect materialism has taken a more sinister form now than ever before. Those early materialists, however strong their academical views, did not forsake idealism: they were yet too near the decaying religious traditions. They felt the need of some kind of idealism in the conduct of life, and the urge of a super-secular outlook. But as time went on, the outlook of Western civilisation underwent a slow change. This change was scarcely felt before the war broke out. Then the inner rottenness of the Western civilisation became at once apparent. The war burst upon the world like an avalanche from hell. The allies cried out at the real and imagined barbarities of the Germans. They were filled with indignation at their use of the poison gas and other nefarious destructive devices. These, they said, were Hunnish and against international morality. But what are the allies themselves doing now? Every one of them is engaged, if the press reports are not false, in devising the deadliest poisons and other scientific means of mass destruction. The very things which the allies protested against during the war, they are now avidly engaged in acquiring and perfecting. They now no longer remember their hypocritical declarations during the war that they were fighting for the safety of civilisation. Now many of the best intellects of the West are engaged in the preparation for the next war, another game of hell. This itself now appears to them to be the aim of civilisation. It was naively thought that the war would result in a mighty spiritual upheaval in the West, convinced as the West was of the danger and futility of building a civilisation on material basis. False hope. The allies, in spite of untold hardship and loss of men, came out of the war more prosperous and powerful than before, and this has but whetted their blood-thirstiness and earth-hunger. How to grab more and more of earth, how to exploit the helpless peoples of the world more and more, how to build up an effective organisation for the most successful perpetration of these hellish projects,—these are now the dreams of the mighty Western nations. Idealism has been flung to the winds. They hold conferences for the reduction of armaments, not because they are sick of war and want peace, but because even in hell there must be a check to competition. While the Governments are thus engaged—not secretly, but openly, to the knowledge of their respective nationals—the peoples are eagerly supporting them. When it is needed to crush a rising China, they eagerly enlist in the armies. They have still as

much zest for killing and destroying as they had during the war. The blood-thirstiness has only increased. We sometimes hear Westerns expressing horror at the war-lust of their rising generations. But then, one should not all the time support Government in exploiting other peoples and raise hands in horror when war, the necessary consequence of the policy of exploitation, becomes necessary. The motive, in peace and war, is the same. The whole of the West is practically engaged in material aggrandizement,—we mean the bulk of the population. May be, they are unconscious of the actual inhumanity which their apparently honest pursuits mean. They are victims of a system. But even when they become conscious of it, they do not seem to mind.

The post-war conditions have brought to the surface what lay all along festering deep in the mind of the West,—the tendency to a complete secularisation of life and a denial of spiritual values. The practical consequences of materialism are manifesting themselves more and more clearly with the passing of days: spiritual ideals are now being openly challenged. Religion is discarded as a concern of the effete. The so-called able and the active are assiduously engaged in the worship of other gods, the molochs of lust and gold. No doubt there are some who are intellectually convinced of superior ideals and are preaching them indefatigably. But many of them do not hesitate to forego their philosophy on specious grounds at the time of action. There are yet others who are actually highly spiritual both in profession and practice. They are the hope of the West. But alas, they are too few to have any appreciable influence on the insurgent animality at present.

We find two main currents in the progress of the Western life. One is towards material development, towards greater and greater acquisition of physical comforts by extending its political and economical power all over the world and by the complete industrialisation of its socio-economic life. And the other is towards the acquisition of secular knowledge (*aparā vidyā*), towards the development of science. We in the East are often fascinated by the latter tendency and conceive therefrom an exaggerated idea of the value of the Western civilisation. It is true that intellectualism, the pursuit of knowledge, is a high function of human life. But intellect by itself is not a guide to life. It is correct *feelings, emotions*, that conduce to the true development of life. We judge the excellence of a man not by the amount of knowledge he

possesses, but by the emotional reactions he makes to his circumstances and aspirations of life. This constitutes his *character*. Even so of a nation. It is not by its intellectual activities, but by its emotional reactions to the national and international circumstances and the philosophical and religious ideals that we know its true worth. Religion is character. For emotions in their primary origin and final reaction are always personal. We do not feel for an idea, but for a person, a conscious being, connected with the idea. Our altruistic feelings, therefore, must have reference to a super-person, call him God or Absolute. Mere ethical ideals, unrelated to religion, are a half-way house. They do not lead to the absolute fulfilment. The permanent moral ideals, the eternal verities, are all derived from the Divine. Truth, non-violence, chastity, selflessness,—these and similar other moral principles are direct expressions of the Absolute perception and find full scope only in relation to God. A man or a nation is therefore truly measured only by the religion that it practises. Science has not yet given the West a religion. The West has lost faith in Christianity, but has not found a substitute. Therefore the intellectualism of the West, praiseworthy in itself, is little proof of its sanity and reliability. Its material aggrandisement shows that it has not yet succeeded in developing the right kind of emotions in the popular mind. The world evokes in it the lust of acquisition and exploitation; the weaker peoples do not inspire it with the desire to serve them but fill it with the brutal pleasures of destroying them.—Life itself is only an opportunity for enjoyment and not for the realisation of truth. The two tendencies of material aggrandisement and intellectualism are twin aspects of materialism and have combined to produce a change in the Western mind, which is nothing else than the substitution of religion by science and of ethics by psychology.

The conflict of science and Christianity has been both a loss and a gain to the West. If Christianity had been a scientific religion, that is to say, based on correctly ascertained data, there would not have been this conflict. But Christian beliefs being often unscientific, it succumbed to the advance of science. And it is well that it did so, because nothing so stunts the growth of men as artificial dogmas and false and stereotyped beliefs. This has been the gain. But Christianity is not all wrong. Its fundamentals are true, though they may be presented in unscientific forms. These fundamentals men can ill spare in their life. In the fundamentals we include belief

in the existence of a supra-mental being and in the essential relation of man and of his destiny with it. These beliefs in one form or another constitute the essence of all religions. By denying these science has robbed life of its greatest ennobling and idealising force. This has been a serious loss. It has done yet another great harm. The characteristic viewpoints of religion and science are diametrically opposite. Religion starts with God the highest reality and conceives of man and his duties in relation to Him. The standpoint of religion is supernatural. But the standpoint of science is essentially material. Science begins with the sensible and the natural. Its standard of knowledge and judgment is fundamentally sensuous. This conflict of standards could not but have its effect on the Western mind. The growth of science unfortunately, synchronised in the West with the natural decay of Christianity. Men's minds were already out of touch with active and living spirituality,—they were lost in the quagmire of dead beliefs and rituals. The high standards of religion seemed to them shadowy and unreal. Life itself and human aspirations were considered by them to have no connection with the supra-mental realities. The outlook of science proved easily irresistible. This change of viewpoints could not but have a disastrous effect on the morals of the people.

The methods and spirit of science are undoubtedly correct and noble. Unfortunately, the constructive progress of science has not been commensurate with its destructive effect on the spiritual life of the West. If science could develop a system of beliefs as noble and as ethereal as religion, it to-day would have been unimpeachable. This, however, it has not yet done. The birth and growth of science was contemporaneous with an unwonted physical and mental freedom in the Western life. The Papal authority had lost its tight grip on a large section of Western peoples. Renaissance and Reformation had set in. America had been discovered and the whole of Europe had become mad for gold, commerce and kingdoms. Commerce with Asia developed, followed by the gradual possession of large tracts of America, Africa and Asia by Western nations. The new knowledge, science, that developed with this tremendous upheaval of physical powers and aggrandisement of the animal man, naturally could not become idealistic in its aim. It could not become disinterested enough. Science became a hunt after Nature's secrets *in order that* they could be employed to the service of the animal in man. Science ought to have been philosophical in its outlook to be able

to serve the purposes of the higher man. But it failed to become so. It could not therefore build up to the measure that it destroyed. The Westerner therefore has become more and more sensuous in his outlook, and science has helped him in becoming an efficient earth-grabber. We know that it has also given a strong intellectual impetus. But we have seen already that intellectualism is of little help to the higher interests of man *unless* it is inspired by spiritual idealism. Science has not yet given us those data which would help the development of that idealism.

We have referred to the sensuous standpoint of science. Having deprived the conduct and duties of man of their supersensuous basis, it is now trying to base them on material and sensuous foundations. Man's nature is not derived from a higher reality, but is evolved from a lower existence. His feelings and emotions are but the outgrowth and relics of his animal ancestry. Religion is an extraneous superimposition,—it is not an expression of man's inner reality; and in so far as it is a growth from his past, it is trivial and thus not binding. Morality is mere convention and has no absolute value. Chastity deserves to be laughed at.—Thus dictates science. The inevitable result has been that no absolute, permanent standard of judgment is being recognised. How to regulate life? What is the ideal towards which man must aim at through weal and woe? What is that by which conduct and mind are to be regulated? Having lost the absolute spiritual standard through the grace of science, the Western mind assumes the natural to be the only standard. That is how psychology has taken the place of ethics. Material aggrandisement naturally makes efficiency its practical ideal. So the regulative ideal in the West has become efficiency through natural development. This ideal, it cannot but be admitted, makes Westerners able and tough fighters in the battle of animal life. But it ignores the higher functions of man and his higher, spiritual, purpose.

We must admit that like the substitution of religion by science, the substitution of ethics by psychology also has its redeeming features. In fact, whoever is acquainted with the growth of education and invention of new educational methods in the West, cannot but recognise the value of the scientific and psychological outlook on life. Ethics propounds absolute standards. These in their application on individual lives must vary if they are to produce the desired results. Here is the need of psychological insight. Psychology recognises the

variations of individual moral cognitions and expressions. But the trouble arises with the *aim* towards which psychological evolution should be made to tend. Those who hold to the spiritualisation of life as the aim, will manipulate psychology accordingly. Those who, however, do not believe in the spiritual ideal and have on the other hand efficiency as their aim, will train young minds accordingly. Thus psychological insight by itself is no guide,—it may lead any way. Of course certain moral virtues are deep-rooted in every Western mind. Truthfulness and selflessness in the private and national life, virility, endurance, courage, etc. are there. But as these cannot lead us anywhere without being devoted to a higher ideal, the earnest efforts of Western educationists are failing to produce anything better than efficient citizens of materially aggressive nations. They are training up mostly *natural* men and women. What is wanted, however, for the fruition of life, is that men and women should be made to reach up to *superconscious* existence. Here comes the claim of religion and its derivative, ethics. They indicate the heights of the Eternal, which man must climb to realise himself truly and fully. The psychological outlook without the illumination of spirituality is a *cul-de-sac*. We know that high spiritual realisations are everywhere, even in India, rare. But the effort towards them must always and universally be there. The moment we recognise spirituality as the aim of individual and national life, we have to mould all lesser ideals and social and national institutions in its favour. Even to achieve these rare results, the whole nation has to strive for eternity.

But the real mischief of the psychological outlook is that men and women are giving too much attention to the momentary details of their mental working. This age is peculiarly "over-psychological". The changes and difficulties of the mind are receiving undue attention. The moral standards may be too inflexible; but psychological oversensitiveness often leads to stagnation and frittering away of energy. We are too much afraid of reaction; and that cant of naturalism is over-fastidious about moral rigour and self-control. Psycho-analysis is frightening people with the supposed consequences of the so-called suppression of desires. These fears are only partly true. But the mischief is that it is often forgotten that there is a higher fact which moral endeavour represents. Suppression of desires is not all bad. Self-discipline does not always stunt growth. In fact, these, when they are inspired by moral and religious ideals, elevate man high above the twilight level where

psychological sores fester. It may be that the pursuit of moral ideals may restrict our animal functions. But it grants a higher freedom, opening infinite vistas to the mind to work and flourish along. We lose nothing in energy and efficiency; on the other hand, we feel more and more fulfilled and become citizens of a vaster, sweeter and nobler world. The fact is, ethics and religion propose that man should cross the dark valley where passions and desires seethe and give rise to strange and various psychoses, by the bridge of self-discipline. The modern man is wallowing in that seething valley and creating untold troubles for himself and the world and eagerly seeking for ways of improvement. Religion and morality teach a kind of beneficent cruelty to self, by which the psychological oversensitiveness arising from sensuousness, is mercilessly crushed. But out of this ruin rises a nobler, brighter life, which reflects the light of the eternal.

Sometime ago a teacher in a State University of America writing in the *Harper's Magazine* (New York), on the changing mind and standards of judgment of American youths, observed that "salvation", "sin" and "wicked" have lost their connotation to them and that "righteous," "pious," and "saintly" have acquired new and very different meanings. The word "moral" itself is going into ill repute. As for "conscience," one young-man assured the teacher gravely that he knew he kept his conscience in his stomach, for every time he ate hot dogs at midnight he was sure to have a bad spell with it. "When they appeal to you for advice, you must take care not to put the advice on the grounds of abstract right and wrong." The post-war Western youth is not altruistic, not sentimental, not romantic. "Our standard to-day is prudence, practicality, caution." "To me," remarks the writer, "the saddest thing about the generation which is now growing up is its ennui. . . . It has nothing, except a search for pleasure, to which it can give itself freely and fully." The teacher cannot suggest any other way out of this impasse than an appeal to the youth's æsthetic sense ;—morality and religion will not do. This is what we mean by the substitution of ethics by psychology. Our sense of the beautiful is very brittle and fickle. It may lead to either heaven or hell according as our conception of beauty may be. And it will not be far wrong to maintain that it is leading rather to the latter place than the former. For what do we find? In literature, sex-morbidity has reached its extreme. During the last decade, sex literature has grown to enormous proportions, and all over the world this is being consumed with unparalleled shamelessness

and avidity. When the common man assumes the psychological outlook, he is naturally drawn to sex mysteries. Free from moral compunctions, the modern mind is tending more and more towards a sex atmosphere ; and when the sex-consciousness becomes strong in a man or people, it is a sure sign that that man or nation is nearing its ruin : men incline towards gross physical enjoyments and become incapable of noble achievements. If we closely study the fall of nations, we shall often discover want of chastity as one of its potent causes. Fortunately the extreme of pleasure-seeking in the West is combined with tremendous activity and virility. This has saved the West from impotence and stagnation. It has however given birth to a new philosophy of life. People are eager to enjoy life, by which they mean hair-raising adventures, entailing tremendous courage and endurance and also sometimes sex experience. Old standards of judgment naturally find little scope in this philosophy. Experience, provided it is of an unusual character, is its own justification. It is because of such an outlook on life that books like *Trader Horn* take whole countries by storm. This also has made possible for books like *Hypatia* and *The Right to be Happy* by Mrs. Bertrand Russel and *Hymen* by Dr. Norman Haire to be published. Mrs. Russel maintains that "the path to our regeneration and happiness, if there be such a path, lies through our animal nature." She says : "That matter is not solid lumps but tenuous and shifting, that mind is not pure spirit but a construction with a physical basis, come dimly over to modern men and women from the discoveries of science. Perhaps this knowledge may at last persuade them to believe—what long since common sense might have taught them—that the secret of happiness is the fusion of the mental and bodily life both in the individual and the community." So this is her advice and for aught we know the attitude of the modern West : "Away with hypocrisies, timidity, doubts. Away with the darkness of ignorance. Let those men and women who know, who enjoy and who are unafraid, open the prison gates for the rest of mankind. . . . Let such men and women build a human society in the image of human beings, vivid, warm and quick with animal life, intricate and lovely in thought and emotion. . . . Such a society, like the human beings that composed it, would be at home in the world, . . . perpetually devising new forms and new sources of delight."

It is such a West, with such aspirations and ideals, that has invaded the spiritual dominion of the world. This essentially

animal outlook is the very antithesis of spiritual idealism. We are not blind to its merits,—it certainly promises more immediate happiness and self-expression,—and we would certainly have hailed it with delight if we had not known that man is essentially spirit and that it is by conquering and eliminating the animal in him that he really fulfils himself. Because we know that and because India has come to this truth after millenniums of various experiences, therefore we find in the aggressive animal outlook of the present Western mind a menace to the welfare of mankind. It is because of the essentially spiritual integrity of man that we have little sympathy for the exaggeration of the modern finds of human psychology which psycho-analysis, behaviourism, etc. make so much of. We know that the psychological difficulties that these fear from religious and moral inhibitions are mere nothing to a determined and exalted moral sense. What is wanted is that this psychological morass should be crossed over with one single stride of moral idealism ; it is on the other side that life should be made to flourish and blossom. It is useless, we know, to ask the West to hark back to religion ; *it requires to be brought back to the lost ideal by the round-about process of quick development of science and psychology. If science and psychology, by being half developed, have given rise to these problems, they again, will, when fully grown, lead men to the realms of Spirit, now lying ignored. The West wants a religion that is science and a psychology which has also investigated the higher strata of the mind.*

Of course we must also mention that mere perfection of science and psychology will not bring about the desired change unless also the West curbs its greed of gold and power. One cannot serve both God and Mammon at the same time. But will that golden hour of renunciation ever come? Meanwhile India groans under the impact of Western aggression. The West may have many fine features at home. But the West that has invaded our country is a menace to spiritual culture and civilisation. It spurns it and is deliberately seeking to throttle it. Till very recently, we had at least the consolation to know that we possess one treasure which the world covets, the treasure of spirituality. The world was not yet so shameless as to deny its supreme value. Now even that consolation is going away. India has nothing to her credit! Spirituality is nothing! The animal is the supreme god. And if India worships that god, she may have at least a subordinate place on the globe, other-

wise she is a plague-spot and the sooner she is wiped out, the better for the rest of the world !

Shall we take this challenge lying down? Shall the animal bestride the world and mock God in the face? No, no, India must rise in the power and glory of her spiritual dominion and give this fiend battle. This, Readers, is our new year's greetings to you. It is no message of peace. For till the world is brought back to spirituality, there can be no peace for India. And as the very first step we must redeem ourselves. The present world is not in a mood to accept any philosophy which does not promise power, joy and perfection. Our external and internal poverty seems to mock our own ideal. Let us therefore *live* the ideal intensely, revive our nationhood on the spiritual basis, filling it with infinite power and perfecting it in all details, economic, political, social, cultural and religious. Then our life itself will be the most trenchant chastisement to the presentday glorification of the animal. And the sooner we do this, the better. Mere talk will not do. What is the use of empty talk about the spirituality of India, unless each one of us *lives* that spirituality? The world wants nothing so much as the demonstration of the supreme worth and excellence of the spiritual ideal. It lies on India most of all to fulfil this want. Above all, beware of the charm of the animal ideal. It has already infected us greatly, unless we rescue ourselves early, it will mean the surrender of all that is best in us to the inferior culture of the West and consequently our cultural suicide. Let not the Bull, as the Bengali proverb has it, break his horns in order to mix with the calves.

Month after month, we have been pleading the cause of India's ideal—the ideal that alone can save the world—in the pages of *Prabuddha Bharata*. We remind our readers again in the beginning of the new year of the precious heritage of our sacred motherland. Hark to her constant call to the realm of the Divine! India is not a geographical entity. Wherever men seek to realise the spirit and to spiritualise life, there is India. For India's ideal is verily this universal spirituality. *We call upon all the citizens of this spiritual India, wherever they may be physically dwelling, in the East or in the West, to strive intensely to win the war that is now being waged between God and the animal. On that depends the future welfare of humanity.*

THREE SONGS

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(1)

कर्नाटी—एकताला ।

ताथेइया ताथेइया नाचे भोला, बोम् बव बाजे गाल ।
डिमि डिमि डिमि डमरु बाजे दुलिछे कपालमाल ॥
गरजे गङ्गा जटामाफे, उगरे अनल त्रिशूलराजे,
धक् धक् धक् मौलिबन्ध ज्वले शशाङ्क भाल ॥

[Siva is dancing, lost in the ecstasy of Self, sounding his own cheeks.

His tabor is playing and the garland of skulls is swinging in rhythm.

The waters of the Ganges are roaring among his matted locks. The great trident is vomiting fire, and the moon on his forehead is fiercely flaming.]

(2)

कानाडा—सुरफात्ता ।

हर हर हर भूतनाथ पशुपति ।
योगेश्वर महादेव शिव पिनाकपाणि ॥
ऊर्ध्व ज्वलत जटाजाल, नाचत व्योमकेश भाल,
सप्तभुवन धरत ताल, टलमल अवनी ॥

[Lo, the Great God is dancing,—he, Siva, the all-destroyer, the lord of creation and of Yoga, and the wielder of *pinaka*.

His flaming locks have covered the sky. The seven worlds are dancing in rhythm and the earth is sinking into dissolution.]

(3)

मुलतान—कावाली ।

मुझे बारि बमबारी सेंइया जानेको दे ।
जानेको दे रे सेंइया जानेको दे (आउ भाला) ॥
मेरा बमबारी, बाम्दी तुहारि,
छोड़ चतुराइ सेंइया जानेको दे (आउ भाला, मोरे सेंइया) ॥
यमुना कि नीरे भरो गागरिया,
(कर) जोड़े कहत सेंइया जानेको दे ॥

[O Krishna, O friend, allow me to go to the water, O let me go to-day.

O my Krishna, why play with one who is already thy slave? O friend, let me go to-day.

I have to fill my pitcher in the waters of the Jamuna. I pray three with folded hands, let me go.]

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—I

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

STATE OF EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY

The state of education in this country is appalling. Just a fringe of the vast population comes within the pale of literacy. At the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, when most of the Western nations have well-nigh brought education within the reach of all classes of people in their states, it is really heart-rending to note that in a province like Bengal barely ten per cent. of the population can be supposed to be literate. In the advanced countries of the West, education has long ceased to be a cultural luxury of the privileged few; it has been universally recognised as a necessary equipment for national progress. In Germany, for instance, every child of the soil has to go through the elementary course of eight years and even after joining work the ordinary labourer has to attend night-schools attached to the various industrial and commercial concerns for the sake of specialisation as well as general culture. While in India millions go without any education!

Of the few, who are blessed with literacy, barely a handful get what is styled high education and even this education, miserably meagre as it is in quantity, is hopelessly defective so far as its quality is concerned.

Swami Vivekananda defined education to be the manifestation of the perfection already in man. As a matter of fact since the pedagogic revelations of Pestalozzi and Froebel, Western countries in the nineteenth century have been trained to accept such a conception of education. Education means to them a development of the various faculties of man so that he may contribute his best towards the uplift of his environment. Systematic efforts are made to prepare, out of each

pupil, a healthy and efficient unit in the community by rousing, with the minimum of effort on either side, all the latent powers of observation, reflection and execution, and also extreme care is taken to culture the heart in such a way that each such unit may ever remain devoted to its own country, community, culture and tradition.

Unfortunately, in this land education falls far short of such a comprehensive ideal. It is absolutely unrelated to the life and environment of the pupil. Lord Ronaldshay observes in his "Heart of Aryavarta" that "the whole system of education is completely divorced from Indian culture and tradition. High School and undergraduate courses are essentially Western courses, unrelated to Indian life as it was lived before the advent of the British. They are rigidly mechanical, and altogether lack that intimate relationship between the teacher and taught, which was an outstanding feature of the indigenous system. The university training of the Indian student 'is almost wholly unrelated to the real thoughts and aspirations of his mind.' "

Education in this country does not touch important phases of pupils' development. It aims purely at developing only the intellect. Lord Ronaldshay observes :

"The (Saddler's) Commission was much struck by other contrasts between conditions in Bengal and in Great Britain. In the latter country education was many-sided. By far the greater number of students was engaged upon vocational courses, a comparatively small proportion devoting itself to purely literary studies. Bengal, on the other hand, was 'unlike any other civilised country, in that so high a proportion of its educated classes set before them a University degree as the natural goal of ambition,' a goal which they sought by means of 'studies which are almost purely literary in character, and which therefore provides scarcely any direct professional training.' "

Thus, losing all faith in anything Indian and acquiring nothing that may be of any help in life's struggle, most of the young men come out of the University after an educational career extending over 25 years. Cultural suicide and economic helplessness are found to be the surest issues of the present system of education, and this is called high education !

Even the intellectual training imparted by the present system is far below the mark. Our schools are still sticking to unnatural, unscientific and even injurious methods which have long become obsolete in Western countries.

Thus want of education on the one hand has made the un-numbered masses a constant prey to disease, poverty and social

tyranny, while improper education on the other has subjected the privileged few to physical deterioration, economic helplessness, cultural estrangement and often moral perversity. We shall realise the situation more clearly if we discuss some of the glaring omissions in the present system of education.

GLARING OMISSIONS DEMANDING URGENT IMPROVEMENTS

(I) PHYSICAL AND PRACTICAL

Any educational programme will remain hopelessly incomplete if special provisions are not made to make our people fully active. How to make our people healthy, strong, hardy, energetic, thoroughly practical and efficient is a great problem with us. The problem before the educationists of other lands is to direct the national energy, which is already vigorously at work, along channels most suited to the immediate aspirations of the nations. But here the problem begins with the awakening of the racial energy before it may be directed in any channel.

Looking at Bengal, one shudders to see how the race is becoming physically weak, lazy, ease-loving and fond of depending on others. Love for work has almost ceased to be a moral impulse. We work only when we are compelled by necessity and even then we grudge, grumble and feel no scruple even to deceive our task-masters by all sorts of unworthy tricks.

One does not receive either at home or at school any training that may instil into him a love for sound health as well as active and well-regulated life. At home he grows mostly in surroundings divorced from all considerations of sanitary and aesthetic requirements. Laws of hygiene have scarcely anything to do with his food, clothes or surroundings. Physical exercise is usually set apart for specialization by stupid and unruly ones. What is more dangerous, he is usually relieved of all kinds of physical labour by his affectionate relatives or servants, and he is supposed to remain an everlasting baby in leading strings. Thus in most of our middle class homes body-building is left absolutely to nature's care, and the most elementary discipline of self-help in personal concerns is denied to the growing child. Naturally he becomes careless, irregular, unpractical, idle and often slovenly in his habits, and these habits become more deep-rooted when in college life he contracts a fancy for snobbishness and a positive aversion for any kind of physical work.

In schools and colleges the education imparted is purely

academic. The only ambition of the guardians is to furnish their wards with degrees and the only business of educational institutions seems to be catering to this demand. The individual's growth is nobody's concern.

In an article published in the "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science," Booker T. Washington, the late renowned Educationist and Negro Reformer of America, wrote :

"Education, which did not directly or indirectly connect itself with the practical and daily interests of daily life could hardly be called education. Education, far from being a means of escaping labour, is a means of raising up and dignifying labour, and thus indirectly a means of raising up and dignifying the common and ordinary man."

On another occasion while addressing the students of the Tuskegee Institute he said :

"A race or an individual which has no fixed habits, no fixed place of abode, no time for going to bed, for getting up in the morning, for going to work, no arrangement, order or system in all the ordinary business of life, such a race, such an individual are lacking in self-control, lacking in some of the fundamentals of civilisation."

We too are seriously lacking in some of the fundamentals of civilisation, and our educational system seems to be blind to this fact. Our education is absolutely unrelated with the practical and daily interest of our everyday life. A few extracts from a book entitled "Education in the Century," published in the Nineteenth Century Series of America, are quoted below to show how educationists in the advanced countries became conscious of the importance of physical culture and training of the power of execution during the last century and made epoch-making changes in their old educational system.

"It was an epoch in the history of the race when the Universities in the last quarter of the century began to appoint professors of physical culture for the development of the bodily powers of their students. *The time cannot be long delayed when physical development will be taken into consideration of the granting of University degrees.*"

"Knowledge becomes power when its acquisition aids in the development of man's executive tendency, when it is woven by self-activity into the individuality of men and women, and used by them as a means of revealing a greater self-hood."

"Every element that enters into a man's qualification for effective life-work along productive lines should receive training in educational institutions, and should be considered in its full relative value in making promotions from school to school, and in the final gradation rank with which a man is turned out to begin his life-work."

"The greatest advance in teaching was made when teachers realised that education was very imperfect, so long as the child was not trained to be executive along the lines of its special individual power or self-hood."

"Without the training of his executive power a child becomes a poor agent for good in any sphere. They are called unpractical; they are negative, not positive; they lack force and energy, and definiteness of purpose; they have not a true faith in their own self-hood; they do not recognise their own best power; they are shut into themselves, they fail to influence society, or the church or their national life for good, as they should do; they leave little evidence behind them, when they die, that they have ever lived."

"The spread of the ideal, that the child should be trained in his operative power, has led to the almost *universal adoption of manual training* as a part of popular education in Europe and America. At first it was introduced for economic reasons; to qualify the child to make a living. At the end of the century men have learned to value manual training as an important educational agency for the development of brain power, for the co-ordination of the brain and hand, for the culture of the observant powers, for the development of the power of definite, purposeful thought, for making the child a practical, self-active, independent, original being and for training his moral nature by preserving his creatively operative tendency, and stimulating him to productive effect."

From the above it is clear how physical culture as well as development of the power of execution have become prominent factors of "education" in the West. In the elementary schools of Germany, children are made to sit in different drill-postures during different periods of the school-hour. Some sort of military drill and physical exercise are compulsory for all. They are now trying to find out a system of involuntary physical exercise for little babes, who have not begun to talk or even to walk. Then, for awakening practical aptitude, the curriculum of every school provides for a graded course of manual work. Paper-folding, paper-cutting, paper-tearing, sand-work, clay-modelling, carpentry, painting form various items for manual work. This manual work is made more interesting and useful by co-ordinating it with text-book lessons or lessons on History and Geography. Pupils are required to illustrate their lessons with their own models made of paper, cardboard, sand, clay, sticks or other accessories. Hundreds of games have been introduced which develop the power of observation and quicken the inventive genius of every child and help him to be prompt, alert and precise. Besides, all these pupils are made to maintain a high standard of cleanliness with respect to their own persons and clothes. One with a shabby dress or unclean teeth is taken

seriously to task at school. At home also even infants are trained to be neat, orderly and self-reliant. An infant casting off its shoes while strolling about the house is actually made to pick them up and follow the attendant and place them properly on the shoe-stand. The training in obedience and discipline which the children receive in this connection both at home and at school, and the awakening of a sense of self-respect and responsibility so early in their life, are undoubtedly mighty factors contributing immensely to the virility and efficiency of their national life.

The clue to this phase of Western education may be had from the following utterance of Booker T. Washington :

"Text books are at best but tools, and in many cases ineffective tools, for the development of man. . . . The teacher who with tact can teach his pupils to keep even threadbare clothes neatly brushed and free from grease spots is extending the school influence into the home and is adding immeasurably to the self-respect of the home. The cleaning of rooms and washing of dishes have much to do with forming of characters."

We have to take a leaf out of their book. Our schools must make it incumbent upon them to develop the physique and train the power of execution of every child. *Physical exercise, some sort of military drill, manual work, strict discipline* for inculcating habits of *cleanliness, regularity, punctuality and self-help*—all these must find as much prominence in our schools as in the schools of the advanced countries. Thus our schools must contribute a good deal towards making our people strong, active and efficient.

(To be continued)



WOMEN OF INDIA*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: Some present desire to ask questions about Hindu Philosophy before the lecture and to question in general about India after the lecture, but the chief difficulty is I do not know what I am to lecture on. I would be very glad to lecture on any subject, either on Hindu Philosophy, or on anything concerning the race, its history or its literature.

* Delivered at the Shakespeare Club House, in Pasadena, California, January 18, 1900. Hitherto unpublished in *Prabuddha Bharata* and not included in the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*.

If you, ladies and gentlemen, will suggest anything, I would be very glad.

QUESTIONER: I would like to ask, Swami, what special principle in Hindu Philosophy you would have us Americans, who are a very practical people, adopt, and what that would do for us beyond what Christianity can do.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: That is very difficult for me to decide. It rests upon you, if you find anything which you think you ought to adopt, and which will be helpful, you should take that. You see I am not a missionary and I am not going about converting people to my idea. My principle is, that all such ideas are good and great; so that some of your ideas may suit some people in India, and some of our ideas may suit some people here; so ideas must be cast abroad, all over the world.

QUESTIONER: We would like to know the result of your philosophy: has your philosophy and religion lifted your women above our women?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: You see, that is a very invidious question: I like our women and your women too.

QUESTIONER: Well, will you tell us about your women, their customs and education, and the position they hold in the family?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: Oh, yes: those things I would be very glad to tell you. So, you want to know about Indian women to-night, and not philosophy and other things.

I must begin by saying that you may have to bear with me a good deal, because I belong to an Order of people who never marry; so my knowledge of women in all their relations, as mother, as wife, as daughter and sister, must necessarily not be so complete as it may be with other men. And then, India, I must remember, is a vast continent, not merely a country, and is inhabited by many different races. The nations of Europe are nearer to each other, more similar to each other, than the races in India. You may get just a rough idea of it if I tell you that there are eight different languages in all India. Different languages—not dialects—each having a literature of its own. The Hindi language, alone, is spoken by 100,000,000 people; the Bengali by about 60,000,000, and so on. Then, again, the four northern Indian languages differ more from the southern Indian languages than any two European languages from each other. They are entirely different; as much different as your language differs from the Japanese; so that, you will be astonished to know, when I

go to southern India, unless I meet some people who can talk Sanskrit, I have to speak to them in English. Furthermore, these various races differ from each other in manners, customs, food, dress, and in their methods of thought.

Then, again, there is caste. Each caste has become, as it were, a separate racial element. If a man lives long enough in India, he will be able to tell from the features what caste a man belongs to. Then, between castes, the manners and customs are different. And all these castes are exclusive ; that is to say, they would meet socially, but they would not eat or drink together, nor intermarry. In these things they remain separate. They would meet and be friends to each other, but there it would end.

Although I have more opportunity than many other men to know women in general, from my position and my occupation as a preacher, continuously travelling from one place to another, and coming in contact with all grades of society (and women, even in northern India, where they do not appear before men, in many places would break this law for religion and would come to hear us preach and talk to us), still, it would be hazardous on my part to assert that I know everything about the women of India.

So, I will try to place before you the ideal. In each nation, man or woman represents an ideal, consciously or unconsciously being worked out. The individual is the external expression of an ideal to be embodied. The collection of such individuals is the nation, which also represents a great ideal ; towards that it is moving. And, therefore, it is rightly assumed that to understand a nation you must first understand its ideal, for each nation refuses to be judged by any other standard than its own.

All growth, progress, well-being, or degradation is but relative. It refers to a certain standard, and each man to be understood has to be referred to that standard of his perfection. You see this more markedly in nations ; what one nation thinks is good might not be so regarded by another nation. Cousin-marriage is quite permissible in this country. Now, in India, it is illegal, not only so, it would be classed with the most horrible incest. Widow-marriage is perfectly legitimate in this country. Among the higher castes in India it would be the greatest degradation for a woman to marry twice. So, you see, we work through such different ideas that to judge one people by the other's standard would neither be

just nor practicable. Therefore we must know what the ideal is that a nation has raised before itself. When speaking of different nations, we start with a general idea that there is one code of ethics and the same kind of ideals for all races ; practically, however, when we come to judge of others, we think what is good for us must be good for everybody ; what we do is the right thing, what we do not do, of course in others would be outrageous. I don't mean to say this as a criticism, but just to bring the truth home. When I hear Western women denounce the confining of the feet of Chinese ladies, they never seem to think of the corsets which are doing far more injury to the race. This is just one example ; for you must know that cramping the feet does not do one-millionth part of the injury to the human form that the corset has done and is doing—when every organ is displaced and the spine is curved like a serpent. When measurements are taken, you can note the curvatures. I do not mean that as a criticism but just to point out to you the situation, that as you stand aghast at women of other races, thinking that you are supreme, the very reason that they don't adopt your manners and customs shows that they also stand aghast at you.

Therefore, there is some misunderstanding on both sides. There is a common platform, a common ground of understanding, a common humanity, which must be the basis of our work. We ought to find out that complete and perfect human nature which is working only in parts, here and there. It has not been given to one man to have everything in perfection. You have a part to play ; I, in my humble way, another ; there is one who plays a little part ; here, another. The perfection is the combination of all these parts. Just as with individuals, so with races. Each race has a part to play ; each race has one side of human nature to develop ; and we have to take all these together ; and, possibly in the distant future, some race will arise in which all these marvellous individual race perfections, attained by the different races, will come together and form a new race the like of which the world has not yet dreamed. Beyond saying that, I have no criticism to offer anybody. I have travelled not a little in my life ; I have kept my eyes open ; and the more I go about the more my mouth is closed. I have no criticism to offer.

Now, the ideal woman, in India, is the mother, the mother first, and the mother last. The word woman calls up to the mind of the Hindu, motherhood ; and God is called Mother. As children, every day, when we are boys, we have to go early

in the morning with a little cup of water and place it before the mother, and mother dips her toe into it and we drink.

In the West, the woman is wife. The idea of womanhood is concentrated there—as the wife. To the ordinary man in India, the whole force of womanhood is concentrated in motherhood. In the Western home, the wife rules. In an Indian home, the mother rules. If a mother comes into a Western home, she has to be subordinate to the wife; to the wife belongs the home. A mother always lives in our homes: the wife must be subordinate to her. See all the difference of ideas.

Now, I only suggest comparisons; I would state facts so that we may compare the two sides. Make this comparison. If you ask, "What is an Indian woman as wife?" the Indian asks, "Where is the American woman as mother? What is she, the all-glorious, who gave him this body? What is she who kept me in her body for nine months? Where is she who would give me twenty times her life, if I had need? Where is she whose love never dies, however wicked, however vile I am? Where is she, in comparison with her who goes to the divorce court the moment I treat her a little badly? Oh, American women, where is she?" I will not find her in your country. I have not found the son who thinks mother is first. When we die, even then, we do not want our wives and our children to take her place. Our mother!—we want to die with our head on her lap once more, if we die before her. Where is she? Is woman a name to be coupled with the physical body only? Aye! the Hindu mind fears all those ideals which say that the flesh must cling unto the flesh. No, no! Woman! thou shalt not be coupled with anything connected with the flesh. Thy name has been called holy once and forever, for what name is there which no lust can ever approach, no carnality ever come near, than the one word, mother? That is the ideal in India.

I belong to an Order very much like what you have in the Mendicant Friars of the Catholic Church; that is to say, we have to go about without very much in the way of dress and beg from door to door, live thereby, preach to people when they want it, sleep where we can get a place—that way we have to follow. And the rule is that the members of this Order have to call every woman "mother;" to every woman and little girl we have to say "mother;" that is the custom. Coming to the West, that old habit remained and I would say to ladies, "Yes, mother," and they are horrified. I couldn't

understand why they should be horrified. Later on, I discovered the reason: because that would mean that they are old. The ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood—that marvellous, unselfish, all-suffering, ever-forgiving mother. The wife walks behind—the shadow. She must imitate the life of the mother; that is her duty. But the mother is the ideal of love; she rules the family, she possesses the family. It is the father in India who thrashes the child and spansks when there is something done by the child, and always the mother puts herself between the father and the child. You see it is just the opposite here. It has become the mother's business to spank the children in this country and poor father comes in between. You see, ideals are different. I don't mean this as any criticism. It is all good, this what you do, but our way is what we have been taught for ages. You never hear of a mother cursing the child; she is forgiving, always forgiving. Instead of "Our Father in Heaven," we say "Mother" all the time; that idea and that word are ever associated in the Hindu mind with Infinite Love, the mother's love being the nearest approach to God's love in this mortal world of ours. "Mother, Oh Mother, be merciful; I am wicked! Many children have been wicked, but there never was a wicked mother." So says the great saint Ramprasad.

There she is—the Hindu mother. The son's wife comes in as her daughter, just as the mother's own daughter married and went out; so her son married and brought in another daughter, and she has to fall in line under the government of the queen of queens, my mother. Even I, who never married, belonging to an Order that never marries, would be disgusted if my wife, supposing I had married, dared to displease my mother. I would be disgusted. Why? Don't I worship my mother? Why should not her daughter-in-law? Whom I worship, why not she? Who is she, then, that would try to ride over my head and govern my mother? She has to wait till her womanhood is fulfilled; and the one thing that fulfils womanhood, that is womanliness in woman, is motherhood. Wait till she becomes a mother; then she will have the same right. That, according to the Hindu mind, is the great mission of woman—to become a mother. But Oh, how different! Oh, how different! My father and mother fasted and prayed, for years and years, so that I would be born. They pray for every child before he is born. Says our great law-giver, Manu, giving the definition of an Aryan: "He is the Aryan, who is born through prayer." Every child not born through prayer is ille-

gitimate, according to the great law-giver. The child must be prayed for. Those children that come with curses, that slip into the world, just in a moment of inadvertence, because that could not be prevented—what can we expect of such progeny? Mothers of America, think of that! Think, in the heart of your hearts, are you ready to be women? Not any question of race or country, or that false sentiment of national pride. Who dares to be proud in this mortal life of ours, in this world of woes and miseries? What are we before this infinite force of God? But I ask you the question to-night: “Do you all pray for the children to come? Are you thankful to be mothers, or not? Do you think that you are sanctified by motherhood, or not?” Ask that of your minds. If you don’t, your marriage is a lie, your womanhood is false, your education is superstition, and your children, if they come without prayer, will prove a curse to humanity.

See the different ideals now coming before us. From motherhood comes tremendous responsibility. There is the basis, start from that. Well, why is mother to be worshipped so much? Because our books teach that it is the pre-natal influence that gives the impetus to the child for good or evil. Go to a hundred thousand colleges, read a million books, associate with all the learned men of the world—better off you are when born with the right stamp. You are born for good or evil. The child is a born god or a born demon: that is what the books say. Education and all these things come afterwards—are a mere bagatelle. You are what you are born. Born unhealthful, how many drug stores, swallowed wholesale, will keep you well all through your life? How many people of good, healthy lives were born of weak parents, were born of sickly, blood-poisoned parents? How many? None—none. We come with a tremendous impetus for good or evil: born demons or born gods. Education or other things are a bagatelle.

(To be continued)

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

When a World Teacher whom men look upon as a Divine Incarnation, is born on this earth of ours, he brings with him a number of pure souls who are his direct disciples.

These are members of the inner circle of his love and teaching and enjoy an intimate relationship not common to other disciples and devotees. He bequeaths to them the internal sacred fire and carefully prepares them to follow on with his work. They in turn transmit the awakening touch to their disciples, until like the stone which rolled down from the mountain, spoken of in the Bible, a wave of spiritual power gushing forth from his feet, fills the whole world. Thus it was with Jesus and his disciples, the Lord of Enlightenment and his disciples, the Lord Sri Krishna, the Lord Gouranga, and all the other Incarnations of God. Again, in the nineteenth century, a great World Teacher was born in the form of Sri Ramakrishna, combining in himself all the powers and messages of all the Incarnations of the past, but with the new unique statement of Truth that not only all the paths that have been revealed in the past lead to Him ; but that every path was equal to any other when God was its objective ; that all that ever could be revealed in the present or in the future lead to the same goal; that all are equally effective to fulfill for every one the great purpose of existence, Realization.

Soon, one by one, Sri Ramakrishna gathered around him a number of chosen ones, who, through the years until he gave up the human body, lived in the smile of his face, constantly bathing in the ocean of his realization. Here they were trained individually and collectively until each was ready to take up the task of carrying on the mission laid down by their great Master. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel" was also his teaching to whom no barriers of sect or creed or caste could ever for a moment interfere with his all-absorbing love for humanity.

Laying down his life as a loving sacrifice, what wonder before the compelling power of this divine example, that all his disciples became inspired with the same spirit of sacrifice and service to every human soul?

When he finally returned to that realm from which he had descended to take on human form for the salvation of humanity, these same disciples gathered themselves into a brotherhood, occupying an abandoned house near Calcutta, within walking distance of the Temple at Dakshineswar. There they could renew their devotion at the feet of the Mother of the Universe, the Divine Mother of their beloved Master, receiving renewed spiritual inspiration to continue their ministrations to those thirsting for the waters of life.

Here, under the chosen leadership of their brother, the immortal Swami Vivekananda, the greatest disciple of their Master, and a spiritual descendant of the ancient Rishis, they were imbued with the principle given him by his Master that the body is a temple of God and that in supplying the spiritual needs of humanity, they must also minister to their bodily needs. As Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) often said, the cry of famine and disease is louder than that of the spirit and no man can be truly spiritual on an empty stomach.

Then began the long record of those errands of mercy that have made the Ramakrishna Brotherhood a household word all over India. Wherever the flood-waters poured their devastating waves, imperilling the lives and bringing to ruin the lands and homes of thousands, wherever famine and disease claimed their helpless victims, they were sent. Following a life of strict discipline as true monks, their lives were a constant and loving offering upon the altar of the many-phased needs of their brother Narayanas.

Standing foremost in every act of relief and mercy was the Swami Trigunatita. He counted his life as nothing in the balance, in the joy of service. Whatever the danger or privation, he unhesitatingly obeyed the call, no matter where it led. In the famine areas his tender heart could not brook the thought that others would starve that he might eat, and often, giving away his allotted portion, he was reduced to one banana a day and some days not even that could be obtained. Contagious diseases and all the other ills that the flesh is heir to held no terrors for him, secure in the consciousness of his Master's presence and protection.

He was an untiring pilgrim. From the earliest period of his Sadhana the desire for pilgrimage was so strong that it could not be held in check.

During the life of the Master naturally the opportunities for pilgrimage were limited, but afterwards he indulged this desire to the full. In the length and breadth of the land of Bharata (Sanskrit name of India) there was not a temple of any note or a sacred place of pilgrimage that he did not visit. Under the burning rays of the tropical sun, over the thrice heated sands of the desert wastes, where every step is torture, through the trackless jungle filled with wild beasts, across wide flowing rivers, up the snowy mountain heights of the Himalayas—through all of these conditions and experiences, with their attendant perils, the spirit of pilgrimage draws the pilgrim on. None of these could daunt the Swami. Naturally of an adven-

turous spirit, danger seemed only to be an incentive to further endeavor. One pilgrimage ended only for another to begin. Many and varied were his experiences on these pilgrimages, in which was accorded divine protection and miraculous intervention in moments of great peril. ३॥५

His first pilgrimage of note was the result of a resolution on the part of his parents to bring about his marriage. When Swami, or Saroda, as he was called, heard of this he was at first stunned. After a few hours he determined to leave home. for he had decided never to marry. Putting his few belongings in order, he left a note explaining his absence, which was found by his grief-stricken parents that same day. The Swami had told no one, not even his Master, from whom he had taken his leave, where he was going, so they had no clue whatsoever. A visit to Sri Ramakrishna, however, consoled them, and they set in motion every means to find his whereabouts. Finally they learned that Saroda had started for Puri. Through friends they were able to intercept him and sent his brother to urge him to return home. On hearing that his father had promised to release him from any marriage obligations, Saroda agreed to their great joy to return.

It was on this pilgrimage that the Swami received his first manifestation of the Divine promise: "Lo, I am with you always." One day, as evening was drawing near, he came to the edge of a dense wood through which his path led. As he entered the wood, the light grew less and less, until at last he was overtaken by almost total darkness. Weary and hungry, he climbed a huge tree and, laying his head on one of its branches, soon fell asleep. A few hours had elapsed when, to his surprise, he was awakened by someone calling him. Looking down, he discerned the form of a man who said: "I have brought you some sweetmeats with which to appease your hunger." Saroda took the sweetmeats and while eating them was again surprised to see the man return, this time with a drink of water. Swami thanked him gratefully and he took his departure. With the first morning light, Swami descended from the tree and searched the wood in a wide circle, but not a trace of the man, or any other person, or of any habitation could he find. His heart then filled with joy, for it was revealed to him that this was no less than the Lord Himself, who, in human form, had come to the aid of His devotee in the time of need.

He returned eventually to his family, but no ties could long hold him whose life had early been dedicated to humanity.

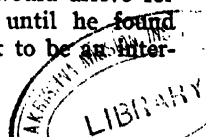
Gradually the family ties fell away and his life became a whole-hearted sacrifice to his Ideal.

On a later pilgrimage, also at evening, he found himself on the bank of a wide river, with no way to cross except over an old ruined dam. It was moonlight and he determined to essay the crossing. Here and there he had to jump over small breaks in the dam, through which poured the swiftly flowing current. All went well until he reached the center of the stream when, to his dismay, the moon, which had been almost as bright as day, became suddenly obscured by a dense bank of clouds. Standing on a stone partially covered by the water, he dared not move a step. In his extremity he cast himself on the will of the Mother. Standing where one misstep meant certain death, he calmly waited. "Follow me," he heard a voice say, and he went forward. Before he could realise it his feet touched the firm ground of the other shore. Just then the clouds disappeared and the moon shone forth with all her former brilliance. No one was in sight, and once more his heart filled with gratitude in the consciousness that his Master's grace and protection were still with him.

On another occasion he lost his way at night in a pouring rain and without knowing it had come near a railway station. Overcome by hunger and weariness he lay down to sleep in the rain, covered by nothing but his blanket. Here he was discovered by the lantern light of the railway porter on his way home, who, when he found it was a monk, insisted that Swami accompany him to his home where he satisfied his hunger and gave him warm, dry clothing for the night, starting him on his way in the morning, renewed in body and mind, only asking a blessing in return.

Swami often related incidents of his Master's love for the truth even when speaking in jest and he himself possessed this trait to an uncommon degree. This led him to be very skeptical regarding undue claims to the miraculous and so far as lay in his power he tested such claims to a conclusion.

Once in his travels he came to a place where lived a fakir near a small spring, which flowed over the top of an overhanging rock. The fakir for a small sum of money claimed to make the water flow at will. Many people paid the price, and sure enough, after waiting a length of time, the water would flow. Swami was not so easily convinced. When all the others had left and he was sure that no one would arrive for some time, he climbed up around the rocks until he found the source far up the hillside, and discovered it to be an inter-



mittent spring. It was thus that the indefatigable mind of Swami tested every claim to the supernatural.

He was particularly skeptical with regard to ghosts and stories of haunted houses. He visited a number of such places and found nothing to substantiate their claims. This aroused in him a determination to see a ghost, if one really existed. At last he heard that something might be seen in an old house, in a certain room and at a certain hour of night. He was living at the Brotherhood home at the time and, without giving any inkling of his purpose, made his preparations to visit the haunted house that night. He went two hours ahead of the indicated time to be sure that he would not be too late. The hour the ghost was supposed to appear was midnight, and as time passed he had almost given up hope, when, in a corner of the room, a faint light appeared, gradually growing brighter until, in the center of that light, there appeared an eye, so piercing in its power and with such deadly malevolence that, although it could not shake his dauntless spirit, Swami felt his blood dry up in his veins and his body wither like a green tree before a forest fire in the baleful light of that eye. His senses were leaving him and he was about to surely perish, when before him appeared his Master, and his failing senses were checked in their downward flight. Sri Ramakrishna held out his hand for Swami to rise and said: "My child, why are you so foolish to take such chances with certain death? It is sufficient to keep your mind fixed on Me." His spirit at once revived and his curiosity on the subject of ghosts was satisfied forever.

At times during his Sadhana he had a great desire to perform certain Tantrik ceremonies one of which entailed a midnight visit to a graveyard. This desire culminated in a settled purpose after the Brotherhood had come together in the old house near Calcutta. Knowing that Swami Vivekananda would not give his permission if he knew, he revealed his purpose to no one and made his plans to visit the graveyard on the appointed day and auspicious hour. When the day arrived he patiently waited for evening, ate his meal with the rest and later on retired with them to sleep. He lay still until their breathing assured him that all were asleep, then carefully arose and was about to silently leave the room, when, to his utter astonishment and disappointment, he heard the voice of Swami Vivekananda calling out, "Where are you going?" Swami stood speechless and Swami Vivekananda went on to say: "Sri Ramakrishna appeared to me in my sleep and told me where

you were going, that you should not go, that he has done all these things for us and that it is quite sufficient for us to keep our minds fixed on Him." Of course this was the end of his attempted Tantrik experience, for he would not ignore a command from his Master.

While travelling in the hills on a pilgrimage he came across a village, on the outskirts of which was a ruined temple. The temple had a courtyard which was enclosed by a wall, the gates to which were always closed at sundown. Swami inquired the reason for this, as there was nothing of value that could be taken.

The villagers told him that, with the approach of dusk, dense clouds of mosquitoes descended within the temple compound and he who remained at night would surely be bled to death by them. Some unfortunate travellers had met their death in this way in the past, and therefore the gates were always closed at night. Swami's skepticism was at once aroused and he determined to see for himself if it were true and if there were any other reason. Against all remonstrances he maintained his resolution and the gates were closed. Scarcely had the sun disappeared below the horizon of the hills when a shadow was cast from above his head heralding the approach of a cloud of mosquitoes which descended on the compound. Then began a night of struggle and torture that he had never before experienced. There was no escape, no refuge anywhere. Protected only by a thin blanket, he crouched in a corner, or rushed hither and thither in an endeavour to escape their onslaughts. Only by a superhuman exercise of will and ceaseless effort was he able to continue his struggle through the long hours of the night. He eagerly watched for the first faint approach of dawn, as he thought he could endure the attacks no longer. Finally the night passed and just before sunrise the mosquitoes quickly disappeared and the gates were opened by the anxious villagers, who did not expect to find Swami alive. Only the thought of his Master had sustained him during that night. It was fully a week before he was sufficiently recovered from the experience to proceed on his way.

This incident again illustrates his indomitable determination to allow nothing to stand in the way of his purpose, and no danger, no hardship, could swerve him from his course. In fact, he tested his will and his strength in every conceivable way. His great purpose was that his will should dominate every aspect of matter, the Spirit to rule triumphant.

(To be continued)

BRAHMANISM—THE RELIGION OF JUSTICE

BY THE REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B. A.

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‘Alas, alas that all men should possess divinity, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, the divine should so little avail them.’

‘Pervading all, yet transcending all; of all the within, of all the without; what none thinks with the mind yet what is in the thinking of the mind, what none sees with the eye, yet what gives seeing to the eye, that know thou as Brahman.’—*Upanishads*.

‘Whenever there is decay of righteousness and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth, for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age.’ (All the Avatars, all the incarnations of deity, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, etc., are one and the same.)

‘However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for all the paths men take are mine. The same am I to all beings. Even the devotees of other gods, who worship with true devotion, in ignorance worship me.’

Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remains the spirit for ever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems!

—*Bhagavad Gita*.

As an Aryan people, we must be naturally interested in the Aryan religions, though destiny has made us nominal believers in the Semitic faiths. Celt and Saxon, Greek and Persian, Scandinavian and Hindu have all sprung from a common ancestry. It is to the religion of our common forefathers that the most ancient Vedic Hymns take us back, and to a period before the great emigrations from the North of India began. These emigrations swept across Persia and Syria and Asia Minor, over Greece and Italy and Gaul, and in successive waves carried our Celtic and Saxon and Norman forefathers into the Isles of the West.

The life of the primitive Aryan people reflected in the most ancient Sanskrit hymns is that of a simple agricultural people, who lived in happy consciousness of the bounty of Nature, and expressed their gratitude in delightful songs to the benignant Powers they felt around them.

With the stage of deeper reflection came the conviction that all the forces of Nature, all the creative, preservative and destructive powers, all the gods are only manifestations of the One, ‘the only being that exists.’ (*Rig-Veda*).

'He who is our Father that begot us, he who is the Creator,
He who knows all places and all creatures,
He who gave names to the Gods, being one only,
To Him all other beings go, as suppliants.'

So, though certain Gods became favourites ; Indra, Agni, Mitra, Varuna are just so many forms of the One God.

It is significant that the name given to the oldest Aryan Scriptures is *Veda*, 'Knowledge'. The Hindu religion is based on the assumption that the truths of religion may be known at first hand, that they form a demonstrable science, and are not matters of faith or belief or tradition.

God, the soul, immortality, all the facts of spirit are matters to be experienced at first hand, not to be taken on trust. All knowledge is based on experience. Science is that which any man under given conditions can demonstrate, prove, re-discover for himself. Somebody once knew the facts. What once happened may happen again. 'Christ knew. The Buddha knew. The Hindu Rishis knew. Why take things on trust, on faith?' asks a modern Hindu.

No wonder then, that when our missionaries go to India, offering not what they know, but only what they have been told, they win but slight response from the disciples of Brahmanism. Their own Vedas have taught them that in the Great Quest a man must go beyond the books, and attain Truth for himself.

For over 4,000 years, the Sages of India have followed a system of obtaining direct Truth. On the basis of the Divine Immanence, God is present in his fulness at every point. To be able, therefore, to reach the inner core, the kernel, the real substance of anything, is not merely to get at its divine essence, but to get at That which is the Divine Source and Origin and Life of everything.

When Tennyson addressed the flower in the crannied wall, he said to it '*Little flower, but if I could understand what you are, root and all, and all in all, I should know what God and Man is.*' That is the fundamental teaching of Hinduism. Only Hinduism goes farther, says there is no *if* about it, but such knowledge is possible, man has the capacity for it, and such knowledge is the only thing worth possessing.

The key of the system is to get at the divine essence of the thing nearest to man, his own nature. By deeper and deeper consciousness, sink into the depths or rise into the heights of your own divinity.

'Truth is within ourselves,
There is an inmost centre of us all
Where Truth abides in fullness.'—*Browning*.

There in the secret Holy of Holies, man meets the Eternal face to face. Whereas in the West men have been more prone to seek without, to gaze outward for Truth, the Easterner and the mystic everywhere, have penetrated within.

The training of the truth-seeker in India therefore is a rigorous discipline of the powers of the mind and the will in order to lift the range of his consciousness up to that upon which God thinks his thoughts and man may think them after him. A whole body of sciences and arts dealing with mental concentration, meditation and contemplation have been evolved to help the disciple.

The first qualification for the task is a complete ethical equipment. There must be perfect unselfishness, subjugation of the ordinary desires, greeds, ambitions. The things upon which Ethics lay stress, gentleness, kindness, forgiveness, purity, love are only preliminaries. Saintship is only a preparation. A realization of God, of one's own divinity is the goal. Union with God, 'I and my Father are One'—that is the end. For the human spirit is in essence identical with God. That is why we love. The Divine Self in me seeks the Divine Self in you. That is why the Beauty of Nature attracts. That is why the wine of fellowship is so intoxicating. To all things that stir the spirit within us, we may say: *Tat twam asi*—'Thou art That.' Where, but in India, could the victim turn to his murderer and say, as the Yogi who broke a vow of silence kept for fifteen years, in order to say to the man who stabbed him: 'Thou also art He'—Thou also art God!

The tendency of this spiritualisation of the nature of things is to make the physical body of no account. It is merely a portion of the physical world under the control of the Dweller in the Body. The True Self is also distinguished from the mind. Man is not the mind, but uses the mind as its instrument in the world of thought. The Soul in the same way is the passional, affectional Vesture of man in the world of Desire and Emotion. To transcend these worlds, and enter into the peace and serenity of man's spiritual home is the religious aim of Brahmanism.

But to distinguish the Divine Reality from that which is not reality, is to create a dualism. How is this dualism to be reconciled with the doctrine of the Divine Unity constantly reiterated? This is one of the most difficult tasks which Hindu

philosophy has attempted, seeing that thought itself is impossible without the antithesis of subject and object. Still the Hindu will have it that there is only One Reality, and all else is Maya, Illusion, Appearance. Just as dreams are true while they last, so is the world-dream, the projection from the mind of God, an appearance lasting only as long as God imagines it. The Universe is God clothed in this veil of Illusion.

Why God called it into being, why God made the universe is, of course, the ultimate problem. The answer Brahmanism offers is on the following lines. Why does the bird sing? Why does the artist create a beautiful thing? So God made the world for the sake of *lila*, for joy, for fun, out of a happy creative impulse, the pleasure of doing it. The universe came into being as an act of free joyous sacrifice, a love of giving, of spending himself. That is why life is normally such ecstacy, such wonder, such bliss. We were born out of the Divine joyousness.

But as to the Why of Everything, the Brahman prefers to answer with his finger upon his lips. We may know something of what God is in the world, of his Wisdom, his Power, his Love, in fact, all that we do know, is a knowledge of God, but of what is behind, the Eternal Unconditioned and Unmanifest, of Parabrahman, better be silent.

In this way place is found for the transcendent Deity of Hebraism, and the Immanent Deity of Pantheistic Hellenism, and reconciliation of the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer with the personal God of the Christian.

Hinduism lays no obstacle in the way of those who need comfortable gods. Men are at all stages of Evolution. Give milk to babes. Give toys to children. Saints and Saviours, Ministering Angels, Nature-Spirits, these you cannot revere and adore without revering and adoring the Bliss and Wisdom which they express and embody. There is no gap in the Beneficent Order between man and the archangel. This desire to meet all tastes, to satisfy all needs, this attempt to exclude nobody and to include all truth, to accept all that God accepts from snakes to seraphim, marks Hinduism as the most catholic, and in this respect 'the most important religion in the world.' (*Fairbairn*).

But this toleration of every form of childlike faith and practice had led to gross abuse and superstition. The counter-acting advantage is that it is able to keep the most ignorant within the restraining influence of religion. And there are ever waiting, for those ready, the cogent appeals of the most

subtle Vedantist philosophy. The gods arrive when the half-gods go. And one must judge of a religion not by the tastes of the idol-makers, which have furnished such a stumbling-block to the severe monotheism of Islam and Judaism, but by its highest and best. Brahmanism has been described as less a religion than a cycle of religions, a congeries of worships, unified by a comprehensive theory of the universe.

With this comprehensiveness goes perfect freedom of opinion. It is orthodoxy of conduct rather than of belief that Hinduism chiefly concerns itself with. You may think as you will in matters of theology, but for the sake of the stability of the social fabric, you must preserve the purity of the family life, you must not marry beneath your caste.

When the Aryans entered India, populated by an inferior aboriginal race, it was necessary that they should be protected from a lowering of the standard of Aryan integrity. The laws of Manu made provision for this contingency. Upon them the Hindu caste-system is founded. Its vindication is the natural inequality of men, due to the fact that souls born into this world are at different grades of development. Young souls have to be guided by their elder brethren. It is the oldest and strongest who must bear the heavier burdens. And it would be fatal if the lower should have power over the higher.

According to Hinduism, Birth like other natural phenomena, is under the operation of law. There is no chance. Heredity and Environment are only two of the determining factors. The most important is the third—*Karma*, the principle of Cause and Effect in the moral world, which directs that a spirit shall be guided into a condition suitable to its needs of experience and to its deserts. It is man himself by his conduct in a former existence who decided the kind of life he should have in this life. The law works out equitably, without favour. A man's poor circumstances, delicate body, slender capacities are the outcome of the use and misuse of the opportunities accorded in former lives. You get what you ask for. Only in the course of a multitude of lives you learn to ask wisely. God is kind. He offers endless chances.

In the doctrine of Rebirth, Hinduism offers a solution to the apparent injustices and inequalities implied in the wide disparities of human destiny. The Purgatories and Heavens through which the soul passes are essential phases of development, the discarnate experiences between two incarnations. School is not left till its lessons are learnt. One does not pass into higher worlds until all that this world can teach is learnt.

One does not pass from the kindergarten to the university by an act of faith.

So let men not gird at life's anomalies, but resolve to do better, to deserve better. This doctrine gives courage and confidence to the most unfortunate, the most miserable. For it cheers them with the promise: 'Where the highest and purest now stand, you shall climb.' The road of the saint and the sage is open to all. Absolute Justice rules the affairs of mankind. There is no luck, but inexorable law. Play the man, you cannot fail, or miss your way. One day you shall arrive.

The sage and the saints being what they are without grace or favour, are appraised at their true worth. 'Those who can, do; those who can't teach'—not so in India. It is only those who can, whose teaching is heeded. These are the men who have attained. The respect paid to them is sincere. High officers of state and royal personages will go and pay reverence to a naked ascetic, who possesses nothing, is outwardly ungainly. He is the symbol of the true greatness of India, of the wealth of India.

For he is the witness that there is something more precious than riches, or science, or social rank—and that is spiritual power. He is the actual proof that a knowledge of the mysteries of life, a command over the forces of Nature, a contempt of Heaven, are still possible to men. To attain to his indifference to worldly things, to require nothing from men, to laugh at destiny, to be a king over himself, master of his fate, to front the world and be able to say 'I want nothing, for I have God!'—that is the dream of the Hindu devotee, and the ambition of the philosopher and the wonder of those still held in the toils of the vanities of Maya.*

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Is Democracy a Failure ?

"Is Democracy a Failure" was the subject sometime ago of a debate at Mecca Temple in New York under the auspices of the Discussion Guild, between Dr. Will Durant, author of "The Story of Philosophy" and Bertrand Russel, English philosopher and scientist. Dr. Durant maintained that democracy is a failure since it is not the people, but the politicians, that rule. He said :

"It is conceivable to me that some form of democracy should be

* From *A League of Religions*, with the writer's permission.

a success, but our question is whether democracy is now a failure or something else. If there is any one here who thinks that the people rule in this country—that they decide war and peace, agricultural policy or tariff rates or nominations—such a person belongs to a different century from the one in which I am living.

"Democracy has failed of its original purpose to establish government of the people by themselves. In various degrees and places it exists, but in the large any tyro, any sophomore, knows that the government of America is not the people. If democracy had even given us not a government by the people but a government by the best, then we might have forgiven it a great deal. But if there is any form of Government in history that has failed to attract the best into office—failed to bring men of ability and integrity into public places—it is democracy. Such men have got into office in the last 100 years through epochal accident only.

"What I see before me as the fundamental reality is that the economic freedom of the individual has disappeared, that the economic equality of opportunity has disappeared, that even economic fraternity and brotherhood has disappeared. And with the decay of democracy has come a growing complexity of government.

"A government is a laborious and clumsy mechanism for the adjustment of thousands of disputes among hundreds of warring groups. Yet we deliberately disqualify educated people for office in democracy by arranging that nobody shall get i to office except by life-long servitude to a machine, and no educated man will pay the price, and the result is visible right here in New York State. Only those who follow the machine can advance themselves.

"Every State, every party and every trade union is ruled by a small minority that devotes all its time to the mechanism of the machine. In the decay of democracy it has developed mechanisms, politicians, parties, nominations and congresses. The people who devote all their time to the machine are called politicians; their function is to promise what the people want and to do what the invisible government says; the only issue on which they are divided is as to which group should hold the office."

Mr. Russel, arguing for the negative, said that his test for democracy was a simple one,—Are the democratic countries of the world on the whole happier, more intelligent, more progressive? He said:

"If you compare the happiness of the average citizen in your country with the happiness of the average citizen of past times, or of undemocratic countries, it is hardly possible to resist the conclusion that democracy has been a contributing factor in the general distribution of the welfare. If you are going to say that democracy is a failure you must not compare it with some remote ideal. When one looks at the Governments that have been in past times, the undemocratic systems that have existed, ask yourselves, have they been wise men who have governed the world? I think not.

"Democracy has certain very great merits which to my mind make it well worth preserving. It is in the first place the educational merit, and that educational merit is an enormous one. Do you suppose that if in this country you had a government of the best people, and by the best people, I mean the 5 per cent. who have the most money, because this is what it will always be in practice, do you suppose if you had a government of that sort, there would be anything like the money spent upon education that is now spent upon it?

"The second great merit is that it prevents certain forms of gross cruelties. In all the cases that history has ever shown us at the present day, where one set of men has the power to govern another set of men, those who will have power will exert the grossest cruelty they can use. If you are going to have people with self-respect, who are not viewed with contempt, you must endow them with their share of power, for power is the one thing which in the long run brings the respect of others in the mass; and any class which is destitute of power will be despised and accused of every kind of crime, and harried and ill-treated and subjected to cruelty.

"There is a third reason which I think in the present state of the European world is very visible and obvious, and that is that democracy makes a more stable form of government and more easy to put up bulwarks against civil war and strife than any other form of government. In undemocratic countries you get insurrections, revolutions, all sorts of change of government by violent means, and the only way I know of to prevent a change of government by violent means is to have a rule that the majority shall have the law-making power, because then if you do have an appeal to force, then the victory would go to the constituted authorities."

In our opinion, democracy has been a failure in so far as it has failed to realise the hopes that it ideally inspires. Not merely a happier and more intelligent, but also a *nobler* life is aimed at for the people by democracy. The highest achievements and purposes of men should be made real in the lives of many. Can we say this of the British and American democracies? We in India aspire after such a noble democracy, one not merely happy but also spiritual, and meant not for the exploitation of weaker foreign peoples but for their service.

Hindu Regard for Cow

By the time this reaches our readers, the Madras session of the Indian National Congress will have revised the Hindu-Moslem unity formula on conversion, music and cow-killing, as devised by the All-India Congress Committee in its Calcutta sitting. So far as we can feel, the sense of the Hindu India is against the clause on cow-killing. It thinks that too much latitude has been granted to Mussalmans. We ourselves also hold that opinion. But we must also remind our co-religionists that we should not make too much of the cow. The sanctity of the cow must not be allowed to overwhelm our duty to mankind. It is wrong history to maintain that the cow has been always held in this extreme

regard by Hinduism. Swami Vivekananda was of opinion that the sanctification of the cow was the outcome of mainly Buddha's teaching. Nor is it correct to maintain, as Mahatma Gandhi does, that regard for the cow is an essential of Hinduism.

Need for Revision

It is necessary that we revise our attitude towards the cow in consideration of national well-being. Human welfare must have precedence to even that of the sacred cow. This is not the age of Buddhistic or Jain revival with their extreme stress on the sanctity of animal life. This is pre-eminently the age of man. And if *necessary*, animals must be sacrificed to the welfare of man. The following report of a conversation which Swami Vivekananda had with a preacher of cow-protection, may be illuminating :

* * * At the announcement of this preacher of cow-protection Swamiji came out to the parlour room. The preacher saluted Swamiji and presented him with a picture of the mother-cow. Swamiji took that in his hand and making it over to one standing by, commenced the following conversation with the preacher :—

Swamiji : What is the object of your society ?

Preacher : We protect the mother-cows of our country from the hands of the butcher. Cow-infirmaries have been founded in some places where the diseased, decrepit mother-cows or those bought from the butchers are provided for.

Swamiji : That is very good indeed. What is the source of your income ?

Preacher : The work of the society is carried on only by gifts kindly made by great men like you.

Swamiji : What amount of money have you now laid by ?

Preacher : The Marwari traders' community are the special supporters of this work. They have given a big amount for this good cause.

Swamiji : A terrible famine has now broken out in Central India. The Indian Government has published a death-roll of nine lakhs of starved people. Has your society done anything to render help in this time of famine ?

Preacher : We do not help during famine or other distresses. The society has been established only for the protection of mother-cows.

Swamiji : During a famine when lakhs of people, your own brothers and sisters, have fallen into the jaws of death, you have not thought it your duty, though having the means, to help them in that terrible calamity with food ?

Preacher : No. This famine broke out as a result of man's Karma, their sins. It is a case of 'like Karma, like fruit.'

Hearing the words of the preacher, sparks of fire as it were scintillated out of Swamiji's large eyes ; his face became flushed. But he suppressed his feeling and said : "Those associations which do not feel sympathy for men, and even seeing their own brothers dying from

starvation do not give them a handful of rice to save their lives, while giving away piles of food to save birds and beasts, I have not the least sympathy for them, and I do not believe that society derives any good from them. If you make a plea of Karma by saying that men die through their Karma, then it becomes a settled fact that it is useless to try or struggle for anything in this world; and your work for the protection of animals is no exception. With regard to your cause also, it can be said—the mother-cows through their own Karma fall into the hands of the butchers and die, and we need not do anything in the matter."

The preacher was a little abashed and said, "Yes, what you say is true, but the Shastras say that the cow is our own mother."

Swamiji smilingly said, "Yes, that the cow is our mother, I understand; who else would give birth to *such* accomplished children?".....

Swamiji: I am a Sannyasin, a fakir. Where shall I find money enough to help you? But if ever I get money in my possession, I shall first spend that in the service of man. Man is first to be saved; he must be given food, education, spirituality. If any money is left after doing all these, then only something would be given to your society.....

A Reminder to Miss Mayo

Apropos of the sexual morality of the West, the following excerpt from a recent letter of the London correspondent of the Madras *Hindu*, is illuminating :

As a further pendant to what has recently been said about the contrast between Christian morality and the morality of the East (especially India) I will quote some figures which have recently been published in the religious press, showing the increase in divorce cases in this and other countries during the last 22 years. In the United States of America—the home of Miss Katharine Mayo—divorce has advanced during that period from one in 17·0 to an average of one in 7·6 marriages. The total number of divorces granted in the United States during the last fifty years was 2,250,069, which means the breaking up of over 2¼ million homes in that eminently Christian land. Clearly the moral and social condition of the United States calls for Miss Mayo's earnest attention.

It is worth while giving the following table, which shows the existing ratio of divorce in various countries, including Japan :—

Canada	...	1	divorce to every 161 marriages.
Great Britain	...	1	" 96 "
Sweden	...	1	" 33 "
Norway	...	1	" 30 "
Germany	...	1	" 24 "
New Zealand	...	1	" 24 "
Denmark	...	1	" 22 "
France	...	1	" 21 "
Switzerland	...	1	" 16 "
Japan	...	1	" 8 "
U. S. of America	...	1	" 7 "

The divorce courts in this country were never so congested with "business" as they are to-day. There is, it would be seen, plenty of work for crusaders of the Mayo school to do outside India.

REVIEW

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION CONVENTION, 1926. *Published by the Asst. Secy., Reception Committee. Sri Ramakrishna Math, P.O. Belur-math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal. Pp. 304. Price Rs. 2/-.*

The Convention of which the book under review is a report, was held in April, 1926 at the Headquarters of the R. K. Order, the Belur Monastery. The Report is a nicely printed volume containing maps and 28 half-tone pictures of the different centres of the Ramakrishna Order and of Swamis Shivananda, Saradananda and Suddhananda. It contains a detailed account of the origin of the idea of the convention and the daily proceedings during the session, a full account of the speeches of the Reception Committee Chairman, the President and many other prominent speakers, as also full reports of the papers read at the Convention. The fifth chapter of the book gives concise accounts of the institutions represented and the appendices II & III give classified lists of the different affiliated and non-affiliated centres of the R. K. Movement. The book, besides giving an account of the Convention itself, gives a comprehensive idea of the principles of the R. K. Order and its activities. Whoever intends to know thoroughly about the R. K. Order cannot do better than peruse this Report.

PLANT AUTOGRAPHS AND THEIR REVELATIONS by Sir J. C. Bose, F.R.S., with portrait and 120 illustrations in the text. *Published by Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., London. Pp. 231. Price 7s. 6d. net.*

This latest publicatoin of Sir J. C. Bose, which has already attracted wide attention all over the enlightened world, is a connected and popular account of the researches carried out by the great scientist into the mysteries of plant-life. His conclusions are well-known. These are the results of experiments in which plants were made to write their own account on sheets of paper or glass without any extraneous intervention, by means of highly sensitive automatically recording apparatus devised by Sir J. C. Bose himself. Hence the title of the book. What are the revelations that plants have made? To quote the summary given by *The New York Times* :

Briefly, he comes to the conclusion that the life-substance of plants is closely allied to the life-substance of animals, and, further, that the physiological machinery of plants resembles that of animals far more closely than has hitherto been recognized. He begins by demonstrating the close kinship of life-substance, showing that various stimulants and poisons produce very much the same effect on plants and animals; ether and chloroform render plants unresponsive to electrical stimulation; alcohol causes the vital processes of the plant to stagger, or, as Sir Jagadis himself puts it, "The ludicrously unsteady gait of the

plant under intoxication could, no doubt, be effectively exploited in a temperance lecture!" Finally, poisons which are fatal to animals are fatal to plant life also, though in minute doses they may act as stimulants, as they do also in the case of animals. So much for identity of life-substance.

When it comes to the physiological activities of plants, as Sir Jagadis describes them, we can easily understand the early misgivings of the Linnean Society. For he presents us with excellent reasons for believing that plants are endowed with a nervous system, a dual system of sensory and motor nerves very like our own; and also that plants possess a circulatory system closely resembling that of the heart with its arteries. A great many of his experiments were carried out with the sensitive plant *Mimosa pudica*, prettily named in Bengali "coy maiden," which swiftly folds its paired leaves and droops its branches when it is subjected to even a slight shock, as, for example, when it is gently stroked or blown upon. Using his delicate instruments, he finds that there is an active tissue somewhere in the interior of the plant, the pulsation of which effects the propulsion of the sap, just as the pulsation of the heart maintains the circulation of the blood in the animal. Therefore, he concludes, there must be something like a primitive "heart" in the plant, but not so centralized and highly differentiated as in the higher animals. In the lower types of animals, he tells us, as also in the embryo of the higher, the heart is an elongated organ, the contained nutrient fluid being propelled forward by peristaltic contraction. He reaches the conclusion that the propulsion of sap in plants is due to a similar peristaltic action. As the pulsating mechanism in plants is not so highly differentiated as in higher animals, the propulsive organ is likened to an elongated "heart," using that term in a broad sense. The propulsive system of plants may thus be said to correspond to the heart and arteries of animals. That the rise of the sap is not due to purely physical action, such as capillary attraction, he holds to be proved by the fact that this rise may be checked or hastened by cardiac depressants and stimulants applied in liquid form. These would be acted upon in exactly the same way by capillary attraction. But the one checks the flow of sap, while the other increases it, showing the action of physiological causes. The rise of sap is thus a function of living tissue.

The experimenter then set himself to probe for the pulsating layer, his electric probe, a fine platinum wire in a glass tube drawn to a point, being in circuit with a sensitive galvanometer. When the probe reached the depth of three-tenths of a millimeter marked pulsations were shown, whose "autographs" are fully illustrated. And it was further shown that stimulants and anesthetics affected these pulsations exactly as they affect the heartbeats of an animal.

Equally striking are the experiments which indicate the nervous system of plants, with afferent and efferent nerves. Again using his electric probe, he localizes the nerve imbedded in non-nervous tissue, at a depth of one-twentieth of a millimeter from the surface of the

mimosa leaf-stalk, in the cellular tissue called phloem. This is the sensory nerve. And the second layer of the same tissue, somewhat deeper, forms the motor nerve.

Thus we are led to infer the identity of life-substance and of certain vital activities and functions in the plant and the animal, each step being carefully recorded by delicate automatic instruments.

Every age has its peculiar form of thought-expression. Of this age, it is assuredly science. Indian wisdom is deeply indebted to Sir J. C. Bose for scientifically demonstrating one of its fundamental conclusions, the unity of life.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Birthday of Swami Vivekananda

The Birthday Anniversay (Janma-tithi) of Swami Vivekananda falls this year on Saturday, the 14th January.

Ananda-Ashrama Activities

A correspondent writes :

Although Ananda-Ashrama was founded by Swami Paramananda less than five years ago as an extension of his long established Boston Centre, it has already become widely known and visitors of importance from all over this country and abroad come to it. A recent visitor of note was Leopold Stokowski, famous Russian musical director and composer. He conducts the largest and most important Symphony Orchestra in America and has an international reputation as a musician of rare gifts. He came to the Ashrama to a meeting and was so deeply impressed by the Swami and his work that he returned for a longer visit at the Guest House of the Ashrama. He is planning to spend the present winter in India in order to study Indian methods of music. He is also strongly urging Swami Paramananda to accompany him and the Swami may do so.

It is not easy for the Swami to break away from the many demands upon him in California and Boston. The present summer has been a specially fruitful one and has resulted in the re-constitution of the Los Angeles Vedanta Centre and the establishment of a Library and Reading Room in connection with it. Daily meetings are held there by one of the Swamiji's assistants and there is also a more important meeting on Wednesday evening of each week. At the outset of the resumption of the work of the Los Angeles Centre, Swami Paramananda delivered three public lectures in Symphony Hall. The first Sunday the hall was full, the second it was crowded and the third it was packed. His subjects were "India's Gifts to the World," "The Great Yoga System of India" and "Karma and Involuntary Healing." The Swami was urgently requested to continue this course of lectures, but his departure for Boston cut the lectures short.

A Library and Reading Room as a branch of Ananda-Ashrama have been established also in Pasadena. They are occupying temporary quarters while waiting for their permanent quarters in a large and beautiful Arcade Building on the main thoroughfare of Pasadena. It is expected that the Library and Reading Room will be installed there by the first of November. Meanwhile a weekly class is held every Thursday evening. So far it has been extremely well attended.

Matri-Mandir, Jayrambati

Swami Parameswarananda, of the Matri-mandir, Jayrambati, P.O. Desra, Bankura, Bengal, has sent out an appeal for funds in order to improve the Charitable Dispensary, and the School, which the centre has been conducting. Jayrambati is the birthplace of the Holy Mother and the centre has been established in her sacred memory. The locality is very insanitary being infested with malaria. Medicine is scarce in that out of the way place and the villagers are mostly ignorant. The Charitable Dispensary and the School therefore are serving useful purpose. The Swami wants to buy a piece of land for the School and also to equip it properly. Any money sent to him will be of great help to the needy villagers

K. K. Tapovan, Bithoor

Br. Panchanan, Hon. Secy., R. K. Tapovan, Bithoor, Cawnpore, U. P., has appealed for Rs. 6000, in order to build a hospital (with 6 beds, a surgery ward and a separate room for infectious diseases) in connection with the Charitable Dispensary which he has been conducting for the last two years. The Dispensary has been doing good work and any gift towards the hospital will be of immense benefit to the suffering people.

Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work

ACCOUNTS OF ORISSA FLOOD RELIEF WORK

(From 19th September to 10th December, 1927)

We beg to announce that the Ramakrishna Mission has closed its relief operations in Orissa, after giving the last distribution of rice at Hauspat on the 5th December and blankets at Dehurda on the 10th December. From these two centres 1726 mds. 21 seers of rice, 191 pieces of blankets and 40 pieces of new cloths were distributed to the distressed inhabitants of 89 villages.

The accounts given below will show that the total expenditure of the work is Rs. 10,175-0-9, while we have received by donations from the public Rs. 5,961-9-6 only. So exhausting our Provident Relief Fund, which is mainly intended for emergency and for giving a start to some relief work in the beginning, we had to make an advance of Rs. 1,825-8-9 from the other funds of the Mission.

We appeal to our generous countrymen for their kind help to make up the deficit amount and also fill up the Provident Relief Fund and

put us in a position to continue our work in future. Contributions may be sent to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dist. Howrah.

ACCOUNTS

Receipts—Received by donations Rs. 5,961-9-6. By sale proceeds of articles Rs. 148-12-3. From Ramakrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund Rs. 2,239-2-3. Advance from other funds of the Mission Rs. 1,825-8-9. Total Rs. 10,175-0-9.

Expenditure—Rice for recipients Rs. 8,714-7-6. Other food grains Rs. 9-15-3. Sacks Rs. 96-4-0. Transit Rs. 334-4-9. Travelling Rs. 245-11-6. Equipments Rs. 69-5-0. Worker's expenses (for 9 workers) Rs. 348-7-6. Establishment Rs. 89-14-0. Stationery Rs. 12-12-6. Postage Rs. 51-9-9. Medicine Rs. 24-13-0. Blankets Rs. 166-0-3. Pecuniary help Rs. 4-7-3. Miscellaneous Rs. 7-0-6. Total Rs. 10,175-0-9.

Sd/- SUDDHANANDA

The 19th December, 1927.

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.

R. K. Veda-Vidyalyaya, Bhawanipur, Calcutta.

The first anniversary of the R. K. Veda-Vidyalyaya, attached to the Gadadhar Ashram—a branch of the R. K. Math—Bhawanipur, Calcutta, was celebrated on the 1st December last with the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmatha Nath Mukherjee in the chair. Among those present were Prof. Surendranath Das Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., Dr. Abinas Ch. Das, M.A., Ph.D., Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarkabhusan, etc.

The Vidyalyaya was started in July, 1922, with a small class of 9 students. Gradually the interest in the work grew, and in 1926, a Pandit was engaged to lecture on Philosophical Texts. During the last few months the work has largely expanded. Classes are held throughout the day, attended by 40 students in varying groups. The subjects taught are Samaveda, Gita, Panini, Ancient Nyaya, New Nyaya, Yoga and Vedanta.

The financial support of the work is derived from public subscriptions and donations as also from a small government grant. But much greater help is needed in order to develop the Vidyalyaya. It is managed by a committee of which the president is Prof. Surendra Nath Das Gupta, the world-renowned savant and exponent of Indian philosophy. Help may be sent to Secy., R. K. Veda-Vidyalyaya, 84A, Harish Chatterjee Street, Bhawanipur, Calcutta.

Prabuddha Bharata

उभिष्ठत आद्यत



प्राप्य वरासिवाधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

FEBRUARY, 1928.

No. 2.

ROMAIN ROLLAND ON RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA

BY DILIP KUMAR ROY

Switzerland. The same old Switzerland with a smile of welcome and a lovely charm all its own.

Rolland had kindly invited me to lunch.

It was on the 25th of October. The autumn had not faded yet and winter seemed to be hesitating whether to come or not. The sun shone brightly. It was so bracing after the chary favours of the English autumn sun.

Mademoiselle Madeline Rolland received me at the gate. She had not changed much since I saw her last just five years ago at Lugano.

She led me into the drawing-room, and we had just launched into the preliminary commonplaces of a first meeting when Rolland entered.

The same face soft with kindliness and radiating gentleness. His personality had perhaps developed a shade of languor since I saw him last five years ago ; but the mellow sweetness that he breathed through every word and gesture of his reminded me of a great English writer who has said : "We cannot look

upon greatness, however imperfectly, without gaining something from its contact."

We sat at table, we four, Rolland, his octogenerian father, his sister and myself.

He enquired about my musical activities in India.

I told him I had been touring incessantly and writing musical diaries and criticisms, teaching a band of young hopefuls of India and so on.

"Having good response?" he asked.

"More than I deserve," I replied ; "I wish you could have attended some of my charity concerts and heard some of my young pupils, girls and boys."

"I fear I shan't have my dear wish fulfilled," he smiled, "for I see no near prospect of visiting your country. It is not likely to be given to me."

"But why—"

"I am really overwhelmed with work from morning till night."

"I know. But what sort of work exactly are you just now so occupied with, if I am not too inquisitive?"

"Not at all. Only I don't much care to come out with an impressive list of my own work. Suffice it to say that I do more than one work at a time."

"For instance?" I insisted.

"I am writing the last volume of my 'L'âve enchantée'—number one. Then I have been writing a voluminous critical work on four years of Beethoven's life—the period of his life which has been most productive."

"And then?"

"And then one cannot always avoid complying with the trivial requests of people to write introductions, answer questions and so on, that is, requests which are easy to make but often difficult to accede to."

"But why must you of all people be worried with such—"

"You see it is like this: The modern European celebrities are becoming so self-centred daily that one has often, in spite of oneself, to expiate vicariously for their sins of omission. For instance, I had to write the other day a rather bitter article for an American journal denouncing the caricature of justice which was responsible for the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. This is not my work properly speaking, but nevertheless I could ill afford to ignore the request of the journalist when he assured me it would help the cause of justice and fair play."

"I wonder sometimes how the judges failed to appreciate that this caricature of justice was not likely to redound to the glory of America!"

"In a sense, however," put in Rolland ruminatively, "the bruited about of the ingloriousness of such a procedure was necessary for America."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, you see, it has served to open the eyes of the self-complacent Americans a little as to the real state of affairs in so far as the American official mentality is concerned."

And then," he added after a short pause, "I am collecting material for writing a book about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda."

"When did you conceive the idea of writing this book?" I asked, warming up.

"It was a book of Dhan Gopal Mukerji," said Mademoiselle Rolland, "which first gave my brother the impetus. In this book Mr. Mukerji has painted Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in glowing colours and that attracted Romain."

"That is not the only reason," added Rolland. "Mr. Mukerji's encomiums on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda have excited a lot of jealousy and heart-burning in certain quarters. One of my motives for writing this book is to counteract this venom."

"The West seems to be rather ill pleased with the East just now."

"Very. In Europe the pre-war nationalism and chauvinism have been gaining ground during the last few years with the result that our people are getting more and more prone to belittle wholesale all the great men of Asia. And they are gradually losing all interest in things Asiatic."

"But what is there to be surprised at in this, Monsieur Rolland?" I asked. "Surely you cannot have expected otherwise of men of whom the bulk is neither great nor mean, as you wrote to me once."

"Yes, but it is not a question of the common people here, don't you see? It is a question of the elite of Europe. I will give you an illustration. An article of mine, in which there was a fine quotation from Vivekananda, happened recently to have caught the eye of one of the big guns of the Schopenhauer Society. And do you know what it was that he asked me? He enquired as to who the author of the fine utterance was. Fancy that!—A big gun of the Schopenhauer Society asking

who Vivekananda was! He is not one of your common people, mind you.

"Thus I feel this, a little too keenly perhaps, but none the less sincerely, as a regrettable feature of the trend of things in modern Europe. And it is one of my chief reasons for electing to write about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

"I wonder, Monsieur Rolland, how you could grow so enthusiastic about them even from this vast distance across the seas and in spite of your lack of knowledge of English!"

"But how could I be anything but enthusiastic about such great souls? The radiant strength, the glowing self-respect, nay, the fortifying confidence in the innate Divinity of Man,—are they nothing? They are assets to mankind, the value of whose inspiration can hardly be overrated;—but about Sri Ramakrishna, well, one must write a little cautiously about him. For he can never be entirely acceptable to Europe, you know. A good deal has to be presented in a new light—in a new interpretation, that is."

"But why?"

"For a variety of reasons, one of the chief of which is the bad atmosphere that has been created by Theosophy."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you see, Theosophy has served to vulgarise Hinduism. Thanks to it, a good many of your loftiest teachings sound like cheap commonplaces, odd, fantastic and bizarre. It has besides rendered it easy for people to scoff at Asia,—a pastime which affords unqualified delight to so many chauvinists in our country."

"Aurobindo has written in one of his books," I said after a pause, "that the birth of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is to be looked upon as an event in India, of which but few of us have realised the full import so far."

"I fully agree," said Monsieur Rolland, "and I cannot but feel that we shall respond to the utterances of Vivekananda, if he is properly presented in Europe. You will be surprised perhaps to learn, Dilip, that Tolstoy was deeply impressed by Vivekananda towards the end of his life. Not only that. There are many people in Russia, like Tolstoy's great friend, Paul Birukoff, who treasure the messages of Vivekananda."

"I am so glad to hear it, Monsieur Rolland," I rejoined, "for I did not know that Monsieur Birukoff was such a fervent admirer of Vivekananda, though I know that Tolstoy had learnt to admire him."

"How did you know?"

"There is an old friend of mine, a Bengali Doctor, who has settled in London. He told me the other day that he had sent Tolstoy one of Vivekananda's books, entitled *Raja Yoga*, towards the early nineties. This book made such a deep impression on Tolstoy that he wrote back to my friend* to the effect that human thought had never yet soared higher in flights of spiritual thought. He—"

"Dilip," Rolland interposed eagerly, "could you get me a copy of the letter? I need it to write an article on."

"I can send you the portion my friend sent me the other day. He hasn't copied it out fully though—"

"I want the letter in full."

"I'll write to him to correspond directly with you. I think that will be the best."

"Right, only you mustn't forget."

"No, no, you can depend upon that."

"What is it exactly," I asked after a short pause, "that you admire especially in Vivekananda?"

"O so many things," he replied; "for one thing, the wonderful directness of his appeal, that serves as a sort of tonic. His words pierce the heart like arrows. And then his iridescent confidence in man, to say nothing of his marvellous power of achieving things once he sets his heart upon them. He strikes me as a Napolconic character in the spiritual realm. And I marvel at the vision of Ramakrishna when he discerned greatness in the youthful stripling at the very first sight."

He stopped and then said: "Only I wonder why the great men of modern India do not feel a similar impulse in the direction of social service, I mean the sort of uplifting work for the masses, the task which Vivekananda had set his heart upon latterly and which he left unaccomplished due to his premature death. Why do not your great leaders, like Gandhi for instance, take more seriously to this urgent work that lies before you all?"

"What a soul!" he added very low, almost to himself as it were; "what deep compassion for the lowly! What pervading sympathy for the down-trodden! Above all, what reverence for the meanest of the mean, looking upon the dispossessed as God incognito! To me the dramatic aspect of

* The letter runs as follows:

Dear Sir, I received your letter and the book and thank you very much for both. . . . The book is most remarkable and I have received much instruction from it. . . . So far Humanity has frequently gone backwards from the true and lofty and clear conception of the principle of life, but never surpassed it.

Vivekananda's life seems elevating indeed,—the struggle that is, between the individual thirsting after personal salvation and the altruist craving for self-dedication for the suffering humanity !”

“True,” commented Mademoiselle Rolland, “only it often seems to me that Ramakrishna never suffered from this sort of struggle.”

“The reason is not far to seek,” returned Rolland ; “for Ramakrishna, though grand in the realm of the Spirit was a far less complex personality comparatively speaking.”

“Do you think that Vivekananda would appeal to Europeans in the near future?” I asked.

“I do ; but only to those who have feeling and imagination. His inspiring confidence in the ultimate Divinity of Man is bound to evoke a response in such people all the world over. His appeal is so direct and vibrant, don't you see? That is why I have decided upon writing a book about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Only the difficulty is that the material that has accumulated is terrifying. To sort things out of such a voluminous collection is a task indeed.”

“What is it in the messages of Ramakrishna that appeal to you most, if I am not too inquisitive?”

“His breadth and catholicity, the universality of his doctrines, which crosses all geographical limits. This is what I call real religion, real vision. A man who hardly knew how to read and write, a man who was by no means extraordinary in his analysis of matters secular, a man who was born provincial,—how could such a man have such marvellous vision and comprehension of things universal? Here he seems to me not only great but towering.”

“You will be glad to know, Monsieur Rolland,” said I warmly, “that Aurobindoo fully endorsed this view of yours. He says that a Yogi of such calibre is a rarity even among the elect of the mystics.”

“I agree whole-heartedly,” said Rolland.

THE ORIGIN OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S DOCTRINE OF SERVICE

BY THE EDITOR

We return to this theme this year again. But before we take up the discussion, it is necessary that we form a clear idea about the following two points.

Firstly, the subject of our discussion is not the origin of service but that of the *doctrine* of service: the two are quite distinct things. Service comes out of the fulness of heart, out of overflowing love, sympathy and pity. These are its origin. Surely the service that Swami Vivekananda did to the world, came out of his intense feeling for its miseries. And in this, he surely did not differ from Sri Ramakrishna. For Sri Ramakrishna also felt as keenly, if not more, for the suffering humanity. Sri Ramakrishna's sympathy was not of a passive kind. It was intensely active. There are several instances in which he actually engaged himself in "famine relief work"—he persuaded his devotee Mathuranath Biswas, son-in-law of Rani Rasmani, to feed starving people, give them clothes, and in one instance, to remit their overdue rents. And there is also the more important fact that the advent of such God-men into the world is solely for the welfare of mankind. There are many among the followers of Sri Ramakrishna, who look upon him as Divine Incarnation. Apart from its feasibility, this claim implies at least that none of his followers deny that the life of Sri Ramakrishna was fully dedicated to the succour of mankind;—for service is traditionally looked upon as the impelling motive of Divine Incarnation. It is therefore superfluous to discuss the origin of Swami Vivekananda's service.

But difficulty arises as soon as we come to the *doctrine* of service. The doctrine of service signifies that service is a method of Self-realisation, as potent as the well-known methods of Bhakti, Jnana, Yoga, etc. Of course the doctrine of service is no innovation of the present age; it has been known for long ages in India as Karma Yoga. But it is a fact that Swami Vivekananda has laid special emphasis on this in his teaching. In his programme of work, which he bequeathed to his monastic order, to India and the world at large, and in the spiritual discipline that he instituted for the training of his followers, the doctrine of service occupies a pre-eminent place. He held it to be essential and specially suited to the present age. It is said that in the early days of the Ramakrishna Order, after Swami

Vivekananda had returned from the West and many young men had joined the monastery, one of his disciples often advocated Karma Yoga as the special message of Swami Vivekananda. This emphasis however was considered wrong by other disciples who thought Jnana, Bhakti, etc. to be more intended by the Swami. In order to clear the point, Swamiji was at last approached. Swamiji admitted that he held Karma Yoga to be the special requirement of the present age.

The problem that we want to discuss is whether this Karma Yoga or doctrine of service was endorsed by Sri Ramakrishna. *Did Swami Vivēkananda derive it from his Master, or from other sources, or from his own mind?* The problem is made real by the doubt that has been expressed about the endorsement of Sri Ramakrishna. It is said that Sri Ramakrishna did not ask those who came to him to take to service as a means of Self-realisation ; there are instances on the other hand, in which he strongly repudiated it. The argument that Sri Ramakrishna's own acts of service and his injunction on some of his disciples to help mankind are themselves proof of his support, is not good enough. We must remember that Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples were men of Self-realisation which they had attained through means other than Karma Yoga, that is to say, by spiritual practices proper. Men of Self-realisation are free to do whatever they like. Their example may not be followed by novices. What is true of the men of wisdom, may not be true of the ignorant. Therefore the mere example of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples does not warrant the inference that Sri Ramakrishna preached the doctrine of service ; we shall have to find other evidences. It is true that even an ordinary man is capable of sympathy and to that extent of service, and that therefore there is no difference of kind, but only of degree, between Sri Ramakrishna and any novice in this respect ; and that if sympathy could be motive enough for service with Sri Ramakrishna, it also may be such in regard to a novice. But is there only a *quantitative* difference between our sympathy and Sri Ramakrishna's sympathy? Sri Ramakrishna strongly repudiated the idea of *Daya*, sympathy and mercy. His own actions were inspired by love and not pity, though like pity they apparently looked. Until we realise the Divinity of man, it will not be possible for us to take up the attitude of men like Sri Ramakrishna. We look upon sufferers primarily as *men*, they consider them primarily as God : the angles of vision are *disymmetrically* opposite. The similarity between their and our

sympathy for mankind is only apparent. The position of these world teachers has been nicely described by Swami Vivekananda, though in a different connection, in these words: "Any one and every one cannot be an Acharya (teacher of mankind) but many may become Mukta (liberated). The whole world seems like a dream to the liberated, but the Acharya has to take up his stand between the two states. He must have the knowledge that the world is true, or else why should he teach? Again, if he has not realised the world as a dream, then he is no better than an ordinary man, and what could he teach?" Therefore Sri Ramakrishna's example is not proof enough that Swamiji's doctrine of service is derived from Sri Ramakrishna. We must find other justifications.

Secondly, the objection to Swamiji's doctrine of service as being foreign to Sri Ramakrishna's teaching is based on the recognition of difference between kinds of service. Not all services are objected to. There can generally be four kinds of service: (1) physical help, with food, shelter, medicine, nursing, money, etc.; (2) saving life; (3) imparting intellectual (secular) knowledge; and (4) imparting spiritual knowledge. Orthodox Hinduism holds that the first three kinds of service are the special duties of householders, be they religious or not; whereas the last is the special duty of monks,—monks must not engage in the first three kinds of service. In fact the engagement of the R. K. Mission monks in works of secular service is considered by orthodox monks as a breach of monastic rules. It must not be understood, however, that orthodoxy requires monks to be stone-hearted or impervious to cries of agony. If a monk happens to meet a starving man and has means, he must help him; or if he finds a life endangered, he must save it. Such accidental and occasional acts of service are quite legitimate and desirable. What is forbidden is that a monk must make such works of service his *principal* or *essential* occupation which must be only pure contemplation and meditation. Regular secular services must be left to those who are householders. Next, it is maintained that when one feels an earnest desire for God-realisation, even if one is a householder, one should retire from external activity and devote oneself entirely to worship, repetition of Holy Names, contemplation, meditation, etc. The objection that is taken against the doctrine of service is that it draws this special class of religious from their meditative retirement. The preaching of religion by them is not objected to, but their application

to secular services is considered to be harmful to their concentrated spirituality.

The objection to Swami Vivekananda's doctrine of service therefore arises from twofold reason: (1) It is not justified by Sri Ramakrishna's teaching and (2) it is heretical for monks and religieux to engage in secular works of service. The second cause of objection is, as we pointed in our last year's essay (*Feb.*, 1927), only an offshot of the ancient quarrel between Jnana and Karma, which however has been refuted once for all by Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the Gita, though the solution may not have been as universally accepted as it ought to have been. Anyway, we need not attempt to refute it in the present article. Our main attention should be directed to answering the first charge.

Let us first pass the situation in review. What was Sri Ramakrishna's attitude towards the doctrine of service? Two opposite opinions have been held regarding it. There are many disciples of the Master, who hold that he never preached the doctrine of service and that there are rather instances in which he discouraged such works of service. The cases of Kristodas Pal and Sambhu Mallik are well-known. He retorted to Babu Kristodas Pal (when the latter remarked that doing good to the country was man's principal duty), "God alone can look after the world. Let man first realise God. Let him get Divine authority and be endowed with His power; then and then alone he can think of doing good to others." To Sambhu Mallik who wanted to build hospitals etc. for the poor, he said: "If God appears before you, would you seek schools and hospitals of Him, or beg for Bhakti, Jnana, etc.? Then give up these thoughts of hospitals and schools, and think of the Lord alone." There is also the case of Iswar Ch. Vidyasagar. Sri Ramakrishna went to see him, and in course of conversation remarked: "The 'gold' is in your heart, but you have not yet come to know of it. It is lying slightly covered with earth. But when you will know its existence, your other (philanthropical) works will gradually decrease." We find that Sri Ramakrishna did not like to think or talk about other things than God, even though those might have reference to the welfare of people. Once M. and Swami Vivekananda were regretting the moral degradation of a section of Calcutta students. When Sri Ramakrishna came to hear them, he severely reprimanded them and enjoined them not to think of anything else than God. Speaking about Vidyasagar's selfless work, Sri Ramakrishna admitted that it was a means of self-purification,

but he added that when he would come to have devotion to God, he would cease from work. The same opinion was also expressed by him in connection with Swami Vivekananda, though in a different aspect. After Swami Vivekananda's realisation of Nirvikalpa Samadhi at Cossipore, the Master observed that when Swami Vivekananda would learn who he really was, he would at once give up the body. That is exactly what happened. During his last days at Belur, one of Swamiji's brother disciples once asked him if he had known who he was. The unexpected and solemn reply came that he had and Swamiji did not long survive this admission. During his last days, he felt no interest for any earthly thing, not even for work which had been so dear to his heart. Lastly, the impression that Sri Ramakrishna's personality and teaching left on his disciples, did not appear, in the beginning, to be in favour of the doctrine of service. It is a fact that many of the Master's householder and monastic disciples looked askance at the method and idea of work as enunciated by Swami Vivekananda,—they seemed so revolutionary and out of tune with what they then thought to be the significance of the Master's teaching. All these considerations point to the fact that Sri Ramakrishna did not apparently preach or favour the doctrine of service.

The other opinion however discovers this doctrine in Sri Ramakrishna's precepts and practice. First of all, certain instances of Sri Ramakrishna's work of service are well-known, — we have referred to them before. His solicitude for his disciples and for those who came to him was not limited to spiritual help only ;—he often helped them in material necessity also. His devotees bear ample testimony to his all-round service. All these instances however refer to his own practice of the doctrine of service. But he also asked others to do the same. One instance may be cited. He asked Manilal Mallik, a Brahmo, who was much devoted to Sri Ramakrishna and often visited him, to have a tank dug in a certain village where it had been reported to him that people were suffering for want of drinking water. But there are two utterances of Sri Ramakrishna, which are much more important than all these. One was what he often maintained, that *one cannot have religion in empty stomach*. Now, if it is true that Sri Ramakrishna's mission in the world was to give religion to the largest possible number of people, it is bounden on all who would carry out his mission to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, nurse the sick, that is to say, remove people's physical and intellectual needs before they can be brought to a position to appreciate

and practise religion. That this fact had great weight with Swamiji is proved by his constant reference to this saying of the Master in his letters to his brother disciples while he was organising them into the present form of the Order. The other is a more direct reference. We shall describe the incident in details. It happened in 1884. One day Sri Ramakrishna was explaining the three cardinal principles of Vaishnavism,—delight in uttering the name of God, kindness to living beings and service to devotees. He explained the first principle, but when he uttered the second one,—“kindness to living beings,”—he became at once silent in Samadhi. Sometime after, having partly regained external consciousness, he said: “‘*Kindness to living beings!*’ Fool! who art thou, an insignificant creature, to show *kindness* to them? No, no, not *kindness*, but *service* to them, looking upon them as God Himself!” Swami Vivekananda was present among the audience. Coming out of the room, he said to some devotees: “I have found a new light to-day. This ecstatic utterance of the Master has shown me that the Vedantic monism need not be a dry, other-worldly affair. If men look upon the world and all beings as embodiments of the Divine and behave with them as such in their daily life, they are sure to have their hearts purified even by the performance of their daily actions and realise themselves eventually as parts of God. This outlook will also make the practice of Bhakti easier and more perfect. For, by looking upon all these as Divine, men will be much nearer to the highest ideal of Bhakti,—the vision of the Universal God. Similarly also about Karma and Raja Yoga. If I ever get the opportunity, I shall proclaim this wonderful truth all over the world.” This incident, it must be admitted, is very significant and propounds the central truth of the doctrine of service. But let us also note that it also indicates the underlying principle of the harmony of religions; for, as Swamiji explained it, the outlook on man as Divine is as essential and a grounding, and facilitates the practice, of all the Yogas. Does this not point to the inner connection of the doctrine of service with that of religious harmony?

If these two rival opinions are impartially compared, we must admit that the verdict goes to the first party. For, so far as *explicit* utterances go, it cannot be denied that Sri Ramakrishna did not expressly preach the doctrine of service; the indirect proof in favour of the doctrine, as quoted above, lose in importance before the overwhelming evidences to the contrary. This apparently leads one to the conclusion that the doctrine of service is an innovation of Swami Vivekananda. In

fact such it has been considered by many. There are many among the followers of the Movement, who consider that Swami Vivekananda has made many original contributions to the message left by Sri Ramakrishna. They therefore look upon Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda as joint authors of the Ramakrishna Mission Movement. Swami Vivekananda, in their view, is the complement of the Truth which was Sri Ramakrishna, and the whole is "Ramakrishna-Vivekananda."

But this conclusion, in our opinion, is not deep and illumined enough. For it attributes a separateness to Swami Vivekananda, which is not real. And there are certain facts which lead us to think that though Sri Ramakrishna may not have openly and expressly preached the doctrine of service, it lay in a subtle and potential form within his teaching and was only *developed* by Swami Vivekananda. We admit that the facts are not articulate enough, but they are surely full of hints. The following occult facts will at once convince those who believe in the Divinity of Sri Ramakrishna that Swami Vivekananda's doctrine of service, and of course, his whole programme of work, is not against the intention of the Master, but has on the other hand Sri Ramakrishna's full support. We may, to begin with, mention Swami Vivekananda's own admission to his disciple, Sarat Ch. Chakravarti, that Mother Kali made him do all that he did. We may also remember that shortly before his passing, Sri Ramakrishna had transmitted all his powers to Swami Vivekananda. Is it not natural to infer that it was the Master's own spirit that was formulating scheme and preaching, among other things, the doctrine of service? We know his going to America was with the sanction of Sri Ramakrishna. It is said that while he was yet undecided about his duty, he, one night, had a dream in which he saw the figure of the Master walking from the seashore into the waters of the ocean, beckoning him to follow him. We have also the evidence that while in America, he received directions from Sri Ramakrishna as to at least some details of his work. Thus in one letter which he wrote to a brother-disciple at Belur from America in 1895, there occurs the sentence: "*Thakur ballen*—The Master *has* told me, etc." That letter contained details about the organisation of the Math and referred to the latent organising capacities of one of his brother-disciples. Then, we must not forget the mystic significance of Swami Vivekananda's birth. Sri Ramakrishna himself narrated to his disciples that Swami Vivekananda was one of the famous seven Rishis immersed in Advaita consciousness, and that Sri Ramakrishna

had gone to him and awakened him from his Samadhi, described to him the miseries of the world and entreated him to come down to its succour. We have no reason to disbelieve this story. But what is noteworthy in it is that Sri Ramakrishna meant Swami Vivekananda to be a powerful instrument for the relief of the world's suffering. And how could that be, if he did not propound the doctrine of service? For, any other path of God-realisation, though quite potent in the individual cases, would leave a vast majority of mankind outside its beneficial influence. The story is told of a lady-disciple of the Master, who saw him some years back in a vision, standing with legions of ochre-robed monks behind him. She enquired who they were and was told by the Master that they were his *officers*,—a very significant expression. And it is a fact that many workers in the vineyard of Sri Ramakrishna, engaged in apparently secular service, have felt his guidance in their work and his direct intervention in critical moments. We may also infer the will of Sri Ramakrishna from the effects the different ways of propagating his life and teachings have produced on the public mind. It is well-known that before the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna began preaching his message, a householder disciple, Ramchandra Datta, preached him in Calcutta and other places. In those days he wielded a great influence. He had his monthly organ, wrote books on Sri Ramakrishna and his teachings and delivered lectures to large audiences. His theme was mainly Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual teachings proper,—Bhakti, Puja, Japa, etc. He did not think that the doctrine of service was one of the Master's teachings. The result was what we see now. Though his interpretation of the Master attracted and satisfied some, it could not produce a lasting result or strike roots in the heart of men, and it died of inanition. We see, on the other hand, the ever widening and deepening influence of the interpretation as given by the Ramakrishna Order. Does it not clearly reveal the greater authenticity of that interpretation? All these we mention in order to prove the general fact, as we have said before, that the present activities of the Ramakrishna Order, its practice of the doctrine of service, are not against the intention of Sri Ramakrishna, but are rather in consonance with his will and spirit. It is for us to discover from which explicit teaching of him the doctrine of service emanated. We have to find out the psychological connection.

It may be asked: If the doctrine of service was intended by Sri Ramakrishna, why, then, did he not, while he lived,

directly and expressly preach it and order his disciples accordingly? The answer is simple, as the President of the Order, Swami Shivananda, observed in one of his letters: "It was naturally not always possible for one like Sri Ramakrishna ever dwelling on high spiritual elevation to relieve the earthly sufferings of the poor, but it will be wrong therefore to think that he was unmindful of them. What he himself practised and gave out in aphoristic utterances were and are being subsequently realised and practised by Swami Vivekananda and others. It was impossible for him to look after even his own person while dwelling on the high spiritual planes. He therefore transmitted his spiritual ideas, apparently under Divine guidance, to those who were fit to quickly assimilate those high spiritual truths and devote them to the welfare of mankind. The greatest of them was Swami Vivekananda . . . In fact Swamiji was the greatest interpreter of the Master's life and a commentary on the Master's aphoristic utterances on deep and noble spiritual principles." *Sri Ramakrishna was a Power, and there was that in that Power, which, being amplified and analysed, becomes the doctrine of service as surely and conclusively as the doctrine of religious harmony. He was the spirit and essence of that which when applied to the details of humanity becomes the motive power of all good, physical, mental and spiritual. This spirit he infused into his disciples, and in doing this, he did all that was needed for the upliftment of the world. As to the details of how that spirit was to be translated into the actualities of individual and collective life, he did not preach much. Nor was that necessary. For the spirit was bound to express itself in suitable forms. One of the forms is the doctrine of service. Our main task therefore is to indicate the psychological and inner connection of this doctrine of service with the spirit of Sri Ramakrishna ;—this we sought to do in our last year's article.*

How does God promote the welfare of mankind? Does he go about instructing the *details* of the works to be instituted by philanthropists for the service of men? God acts as the motive power in the heart of the good. He is the inspiration, indeterminate, but abiding, stimulating them to acts of service, the details they themselves think and work out. *Similarly Sri Ramakrishna established himself in the heart of his disciples as the fountainhead of inspiration,—for, man, as they approach God become more and more like him in nature, ways and influence. He did not need to specify himself. Therefore as Swami Shivananda observes, he sought out fit disciples for*

receiving his spiritual powers and his main task, during the last years of his life, became the training of those disciples. It is well-known how shortly before his passing, he transmitted all his powers to Swami Vivekananda. This is also the reason why to all who approached him and whom he found fit, his one advice was to devote themselves to the realisation of God. For only in so far as one realises God, does one become fit and potent to do good to men. He often said that endowed with the power of God man can accomplish wonderful things, but devoid of that, even a whole life's efforts prove barren. This does not indicate that he was against doing good. The reasons why he wanted the spiritually-minded to give themselves solely to spiritual practices proper were several. We find that the instances in which Sri Ramakrishna advised against works of service fall under three heads: (1) There were those who were extremely egoistic in their outlook; their doing good was a sort of profession which they had taken to just as they would have to any other. This attitude does little good to the doer and incalculable harm to the society; for, thinking themselves manipulators of social forces, they often destroy things and introduce others which prove ultimately harmful. To this class, Sri Ramakrishna's retort was extremely sarcastic and bitter: he wanted them to remember that there was a God to look after the world. (2) There was another class as represented by Vidyasagar, Sambhu Mallik, Ishan Mukherji, etc., who really felt for the suffering humanity and thought service to be an end in itself. Sri Ramakrishna found that that idea was standing in their way to higher realisations. Hence his remarks about Vidyasagar, his exhortation to Ishan to cease from all work, and his sarcastic question to Sambhu Mallik whether he would ask God for schools and hospitals when he met him. He wanted to remind them that doing good was only a *means* to a higher realisation—the realisation of God, that philanthropy was not an ultimate aim. Here the unerring instinct of the ideal Hindu spoke through Sri Ramakrishna. Hinduism never forgets that even the highest altruism falls short of the highest truth; even in that there is ignorance and egoism. This also must be transcended. We have already referred to this fact, that sympathy must be converted to worship, to God-vision. The element of pity and the consciousness of the object of service being human, must be eliminated. (3) There was a third section, his intimate disciples, whom he wanted to devote themselves solely to God-realisation. The reason was that he wanted to make them masters of the highest

wisdom and fit recipients of his puissant spirit, so that they might afterwards devote themselves effectively to the service of men. It is for these reasons that he personally did not preach the doctrine of service. *He was busy with the quintessence of the whole spiritual scheme.* He sowed the seed, knowing that the soil was fertile and the tree would grow of itself. The doctrine of service was *implied* in his life and teachings.

We said that Sri Ramakrishna did not circumscribe himself by fixed doctrines. But the essentials of his spirit found general expression in two teachings; (1) Man's sole duty is the realisation of God or Truth; and (2) the various well-known creeds are all ways to God or Truth. We find these two teachings emphasised again and again in his life and precepts. The first is fundamental. For it implies a spiritual view of life, the view that all whatever man does must be made into pathways to God. From this it follows that every man's duty is a worship. But that, though partly so, is not fully the doctrine of service. Duty generally signifies domestic duty. The average man has his scope generally limited by his domestic concerns, leaving a thin margin of social duties. The doctrine of service implies much more than that: it makes the service of all suffering mankind, in the neighbourhood, the country or the world, one's duty. It widens the horizon considerably, so that the mere spiritualisation of one's duties whatever they be, is not the doctrine of service,—there is the new element of added duties. This addition cannot be derived from the first teaching of the Master. That, in our opinion, is derived from the other teaching, that of the harmony of religions. It was a unique teaching of Sri Ramakrishna. It must be mentioned however that it is not an entirely spiritual teaching. The doctrine of religious harmony teaches that other creeds than what one professes are also as good means of God-realisation as one's own, and that therefore one should not be fanatically disposed towards them but should on the other hand respect them. Suppose one does not follow this teaching; will that obstruct one's personal Self-realisation? No; for we know there have been many Christians of God-realisation, even though they looked upon us as deluded heathens. Fanaticism may not be always harmful to one's spiritual progress. But it warps the intellect and has bad social reactions. It breeds social disharmony and misunderstanding. So this teaching of religious harmony is calculated *mainly* to bring about social, national and international unity and harmony. This is what

we mean by its being not intrinsically spiritual. Here then we have one teaching of the Master which was meant more for social service than spiritual. Has it anything to do with the doctrine of service?

But let it not be understood that the doctrine of religious harmony has no spiritual bearing at all. It has an aspect in which it teaches a new spiritual ideal. The ordinary idea is that every man should realise a single aspect of God. This teaching wants that every man should realise as many aspects of God as possible. That parable of Sri Ramakrishna, in which a dyer produces various colours from the same tub of dye is very significant. Each of us has to be like this dyer, capable of realising God in all his aspects. This is the type of man the new age wants, a man capable of universal sympathy, not merely sympathising but identifying himself with all religions just as Sri Ramakrishna did. But it will be of little utility, if the doctrine of harmony referred to only *religious* sympathy. For in the intercourse between men and men, the religious aspect does not form even a hundredth part. Has it not also a bearing on the ordinary intercourse of mankind? When we meet ordinary persons in our daily life, are we not also to practice harmony then? Sri Ramakrishna at least did so. He knew how to identify himself with the standpoint of every man, be it spiritual or worldly. What was the secret? It was his vision of the Divine in the process of manifestation in every man. To him every life was a religion. It was in this spirit that Swami Vivekananda exclaimed: Would that there were a religion for every man! He said in one of his lectures that every life was a religion. To so look upon man was to truly realise religious harmony; and only then will the true purpose of this teaching of the Master, the establishment of universal peace, be fulfilled. This new attitude towards man is the same as the worship of man as God. For, unless we look upon every life as the manifestation of God, we cannot be truly harmonious, and cannot also truly serve. Here then is the psychological connection: for both these attitudes, of harmony and service, arise out of the consciousness of man's inherent Divinity. This was what we sought to maintain in our last year's article. In fact, it is our conviction that unless there is this spirit of service, religious harmony will become verbal and hollow. For the spirit must not only permeate thought but also action; and when it has done so, it will have this twofold manifestation:—they are but aspects of the same reality. As our revered President

observed, Swami Vivekananda was the interpreter of Sri Ramakrishna's life, the commentary on the aphoristic teachings of the Master. The Master infused his spirit into his disciples,—that spirit is nothing less than the unitary vision of reality and the universe. This vision, when it truly and fully permeates a man, finds dual expression on the noumenal and phenomenal planes. On the transcendental plane, it is unity with the Transcendental Divine ; in the phenomenal, it is play with God as he variously manifests himself in the variegated forms of the universe. This phenomenal aspect again takes the dual form of harmony and service. The ground is the Advaita consciousness. These are the fundamental psychological facts, and we can well discover in them the source of Swami Vivekananda's doctrine of service. Service originates from love and sympathy in the ordinary plane. But when by constant practice, our sympathy is purged of its earthly taints, when we learn to look upon suffering humanity as only God in different forms (assumed by him in order to offer us opportunity to serve him, as Swami Vivekananda says), we find that the consciousness of the Divine in men is the motive of service, and such service becomes a potent means of God-realisation: *this is the doctrine of service*. Its origin, so far as the Ramakrishna Order is concerned, is traceable to that psychology which underlies Sri Ramakrishna's whole teaching and especially his teaching on the harmony of religions. The fact is that both Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda taught and exemplified a certain attitude towards life and reality ; religious harmony and service both come out of that attitude, and also that other doctrine of Swami Vivekananda that there is no sin. They all rise out of the monistic consciousness.

Such is our comprehension of the problem. Sri Ramakrishna may not have expressly asked Swami Vivekananda and other disciples to undertake secular works for the service of man and to propound the doctrine of service by which a universal spirit of service could be evoked helping on the one hand the national regeneration in its various aspects and purifying on the other hand the hearts of the workers and leading them on to Self-realisation, the only one goal of human life. But there is that in Sri Ramakrishna's teaching, which directly and inevitably leads to them. If Sri Ramakrishna's teaching was the seed, in the fertile life of Swami Vivekananda and other disciples, this has become a mighty tree, of which this doctrine of service is a main branch.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—I

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

(II) CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC

We have already stated that education under the present system is not suited to the cultural and economic requirements of our people. Before suggesting improvements we need try to understand these requirements clearly.

India has a distinct culture of her own. The entire structure of her civilisation rests on certain ideas and ideals of human life, which have been discovered after many centuries of patient research by the Rishis of old. These ideas and ideals are related to the spiritual growth of man.

It is on the growth of the inner man that the well-being of the individual as well as the society does depend. One has to rise triumphantly above the brute impulses of his mind before he can taste real happiness or contribute substantially towards the happiness of others. As every individual wants happiness and every society wants peace, the life of every individual should be one continued struggle for self-purification, otherwise there cannot be peace or happiness for anybody. After self-purification one becomes truly divine. His higher Self shines forth in all its splendour of boundless love, knowledge and bliss. This is the goal, the consummation of spiritual growth towards which every human being needs consciously advance.

Every phase of life in Hindu society was adjusted to meet this primary demand for spiritual growth. Such a social structure was raised that made it possible for every individual to contribute his maximum towards the common weal and at the same time to advance steadily towards perfection. Life was looked upon as an organic whole, and all its phases were regulated to advance both society as well as the individual towards an ideal perfection.

Social status was measured not by wealth or military powers but by spiritual growth. The custodians of spirituality, namely, the Brahmins, were placed on the top of the social scale. Arms, capital and labour represented by the Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras were all regulated by laws framed by the spiritually advanced group. Thus the various social groups were not

allowed indefinitely to develop either military despotism, or commercial greed or lapse into servile inanity—the various social forces were controlled and directed towards the central demand of individual perfection and common weal. The life of every individual of the cultured classes was practically a graded course of renunciation and service through four stages of spiritual discipline. To the householder marriage was not a charter for sensuality, it was a necessary discipline for individual perfection as well as social well-being. Property was held as a trust and not merely as a means for endless sense-enjoyment. Men were not to live for the purpose of eating, drinking and making merry. They were not to spend their entire energy and stake their nobler instincts for mere material aggrandisement. Men were to eat so that they might live for the purpose of evolving spiritually. India realised that the inner man should not be starved for fattening the grosser self ; for that is sure to bring sufferings into the individual as well as collective life. So both the acquisition and use of wealth were so adjusted that they might not disturb the inner growth.

In the economic field, therefore, strife and struggles, fights and competitions were minimised to a degree. Each village community was made almost a self contained unit. Different vocations were distributed among distinct caste-groups, and farming was an almost universal source of supplementary income. Bread-earning was made a smooth affair and everybody could find time for self-culture. Thus in the calm surroundings of villages lived our forefathers their simple, contented lives with the minimum of anxiety for bread winning and maximum of devotion to spiritual growth.

Thus renunciation and service were made the channels through which our racial life has been flowing for thousands of years. Certainly there have been at times ebbs and even stagnation in this racial stream due to natural gravitation of our grosser self towards selfishness and sense-enjoyment. But spiritual leaders have never been too late to appear and inspire the race to march on its chosen path. Forms, ceremonials, details of social structure were, of course, readjusted from time to time to suit the demand of changed environments, but the ideals of human perfection, the principles of truth, purity, love and devotion and the methods of renunciation and service have never been forsaken.

At present we stand on the brink of a cultural catastrophe. The advanced nations of the world have dazzled us with their material prosperity and we are being lured out of our cultural

rut. With them wealth and power are first principles on which their civilisation rests. Self-aggrandisement is the key-note of individual and national life. With many, religion is tending to be a ceremonial meant for diversion, and morality an accidental ornament of private life. Life is supposed to be bounded by the senses and intellect. The success of an individual or a nation is measured by the wealth it has hoarded or the power it wields over others. So instead of renunciation and service, self-aggrandisement and competition are the channels through which the modern nations move. Upon such a culture is based our present system of education. No wonder, therefore, that educated India under the hypnotic spell of modern education is about to receive this culture with open arms.

A bulk of our educated countrymen do not find anything good or distinctive in Indian culture, and is prepared to reshape our entire socio-economic structure in the lathe of the modern nations.

While another section of our community though clinging obstinately to every bit of forms and structural details has lost sight of the central demand for spiritual growth through self-purification. Attachment to externals without a vision of spiritual life has given rise to a cultural paradox. Hatred, jealousy, intolerance, cruelty, hypocrisy, selfishness are all masquerading in the name of religion. This has let loose disruptive forces within the community. Sects are fighting with sects and castes with castes because they have lost the thread of central unity. Individuals ignorant of the import of our glorious culture have become spiritually enfeebled, and the lower self is becoming uppermost in their thoughts. Without real spiritual culture every day they are drawing closer and closer to a self-centred materialistic outlook of life, and they are becoming more and more liable to be swept off their cultural groove by any lure of wealth or power. The motion has already commenced and our present social structure is too dismantled to arrest this motion. One wing of our society is consciously leaving the central ideal of spiritual growth, while from the fossilised fingers of the other wing the ideal is unconsciously slipping away. And there is no accepted authority within the land that can save the society from the impending danger of a thorough cultural alienation, which means extinction of this race.

Such is the state of our society when the combined industrialism of the advanced nations have made it well-nigh impos-

sible to preserve the self-contained structure of our village community.

Science has wrought miracles. Foreign nations have actually become our next-door neighbours. Natural barriers can no longer insulate a country from the rest of the world. Economic life of a nation is no longer limited within a particular country. It has to adjust itself with the economic forces of the world. Even the cart-driver in an out-of-the-way Indian village has to shake hands with Mr. Ford of America and enlist himself in the army of motor-drivers. The American motor-prince presses him more heavily than his neighbouring cart-men.

The entire world has literally become one huge market where open competition alone determines the life or death of a nation. This world-market is practically held and controlled by the advanced nations. Ceaselessly to expand their economic domain seems to be their vital concern, and for this they are concentrating untold capital, raising the efficiency of labour by systematic training, utilising applied science for economising labour and building up gigantic organisations of industry and commerce. Every corner of the earth is being ransacked by them for raw materials and no contrivance is left untouched to find a market for their finished commodities.

Who can now draw a magic circle round a group of villages and stop the egress and ingress of commodities? The people do not feel the necessity, as they have lost sight of the central principle of their village structure. Moreover bread-problem has become extremely keen. Their age-old vocations do not pay; they have to compete with foreign manufactures which are cheaper and more attractive. Plain living and high thinking is every day becoming a thing of the past. Modern world has made our life complex and our tastes delicate. We are eager for fine things and we must have them cheap. With all our gates wide open to the cheap and attractive commodities of other lands, who can lock up the tastes and fancies of this vast nation within the four corners of ancient or even medieval India? Porcelain, glass and enamel are replacing earthenware; the classic wheel of the potter is going to stop and find a place in the museum. Mills and factories produce cheap goods—they are going to dislodge our craftsmen. The weaver does not find a market for his textiles, nor can the blacksmith stick to his vocation. They must find out new avenues of income or they will die. For the sake of bare existence they are being driven out of their vocation, their village home,

probably to join the labour corps of some mills or factories. They will not mind leaving their social groove where they are unable to support themselves.

Thus under the impact of modern economic forces India is slowly, yet surely gravitating towards big-scale industrialism. Mills and factories are springing up and they are actually attracting hordes of labourers from the peasantry and craftsmen. They seem to have come to stay and spread in this land like any other gift of modern science and accomplish the total disruption of our village structure. Men like Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar think seriously that under modern conditions we cannot live, unless we start *ad infinitum* big industries even with foreign capital and recast our entire socio-economic structure in the moulds of the advanced countries. The tidal wave of industrialism is thus advancing in rapid strides, and the people are not in a mood to resist it, nor in a position to do without it.

We are between the horns of a dilemma. It seems as if we cannot help courting industrialism for our very existence. Neither can we live without our cultural ideals which seem to be fundamentally opposed to industrialism. For industrialism is sure to usher competition and fight within and without the nation. Modern history is a harrowing account of ceaseless fight between capital and labour, unscrupulous exploitation of weaker races on the point of bayonet, bloody struggles between advanced nations for industrial booty, systematic culture of greed, indolence, luxury and ferocity among dividend-holders, and degeneration of poor labourers into criminal types or human automatons. And these are the issues of industrialism. Industrialism brings bread, but it does not bring peace to humanity. How can we preserve our cultural ideals and yet accommodate this pernicious industrialism?

This is undoubtedly a puzzling problem and it has given rise to a good deal of controversy. One school of thinkers hold that we should give up our cultural ideals altogether and vote solidly for industrialism, without which they believe we are bound to be economically unfit for existence under modern conditions. While another school of thinkers prescribe that we should summarily dismiss industrialism as a bane of human civilization, stick to our own cultural ideals and revive our ancient socio-economic structure with or without any modification whatsoever. This wholesale rejection, either of industrialism or of our cultural ideals prescribed by the two opposing schools seems to be poor attempts at the solution of the problem.

A higher synthesis of the two contradictory elements and not a mere short-cut by eliminating one of them seems to be the only rational method of solving the problem.

We are perfectly confident that Swamiji suggested such a rational procedure when he laid down the following injunction :

"Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now and decide. We are to put the chemicals together and the crystallisation will be done by nature according to her laws."

Industrialism versus civilisation has become a world-problem. Gigantic labour movements on the Continent are trying to evolve new structures which can make a nation prosper without hurting anyone within or without it. Of these we have yet to see the result.

We, too, need try to solve the problem in our own way, not on paper but in the economic field. We have no authority to thrust any paper programme upon the society, which is lying at the mercy of the disruptive influence of modern socio-economic conditions, as mentioned above. We cannot control the village market, we cannot eliminate competition with foreign goods. Nor can we command the tastes of our people, nor force them to remain within the vocational grooves of different castes. Lack of faith in our cultural ideals on the one hand and tremendous economic pressure on the other have set in a chaotic motion within the society. Who can arrest this motion now? The people alone can do it and will do it only when they will be made to feel the necessity. The people are the only authority on whom the future of the country entirely depends. They have to be properly equipped and allowed to compare, contrast, reject, accept, modify and adopt things and finally find out a solution of the puzzling socio-economic problem.

Education, therefore, at the present moment is required, just to equip our people for this momentous experiment. The task of the educationist is to make our people culturally self-conscious by broad-casting spiritual ideas and ideals, and at the same time throw open to them all the ways and means of economic well-being as yet discovered and leave them to a natural process of self-adjustment. Demand for spiritual growth and culture of all noble virtues that help this growth have again to be made vital factors of our life, and at the same time we have to be initiated into the mysteries of modern science.

Our country is mainly agricultural, so the educationist needs

make it a point to enlighten everybody as to what science has contributed towards the improvement of *agriculture*. Our craftsmen immediately require a lift, so that they may produce cheaper and more attractive goods and cater to our changed tastes. Hence they need have a thorough knowledge of what science has done for the improvement of *home-industries* by introducing hand machines or small power machines. Education must make our masses conversant with up-to-date principles of *hygiene and sanitation* so that they may fight successfully with disease. They need know how *co-operative organisations* have worked miracles in other lands, and how they have actually commenced to work in this country.

These our people need immediately know, and along with all these they have to be taught to love, adore, and practise the noble ideas and ideals of our glorious culture. The real spirit of religion adapted so nicely in Hinduism to suit various temperaments and stages of spiritual growth has again to be made a living theme of Hindu life. This is the dual task before the educationist, this is the equipment for the great experiment out of which will emerge a new socio-economic structure suited to our country.

For economic and cultural education, vocational training and character building are essential ; but the present system of education has made very little provision for these.

(To be continued)

TO SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

BY DR. V. J. ENOS

How like the fragrant rose,
Whose perfume ladens all the air
And e'en till her last petal blows,
Intrigues the mind within fancies rare,
Art thou !

How like the full fair moon,
Showering the Earth with liquid light,
Transforming the heart of deepest night,
With beauty for outrivalling the noon,
Art thou !

Oh love, Oh bliss, O life divine,
 What chord within my heart was struck,
 Which sounds so mad, so sweet a tone
 I fain would know no more of Earth?*

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

(Continued from the last issue)

BIRTH, YOUTH AND MONKHOOD

Swami Trigunatita was born on Monday, the 30th of January, 1865, at 10 P.M., at Nourah, in the Pai Khati, of 24 Pergonas, Bengal. His maternal grandfather, Babu Nilkamal Sircar, was a powerful Zemindar of Pai Khati. Both his father, Babu Shib Kristo Mittra, descendant of Mittra Bonso of Katorc, Sub-division Barasat, 24-Pergonas, Bengal, and his mother came of a Zemindar family.

Saroda Mittra's (Swami Trigunatita's) birth date and time were regarded as very auspicious by all the astrologers. In the opinion of the astrologers, the child was to become a great ascetic (Yogi), learned as well as all-beloved in the future. The astrologers told his parents that saints are generally born at such auspicious moments, and they predicted that their son would be a spiritual giant.

He began to develop in every sense of the word day by day. When he was six months old the *Annaprasan* ceremony was performed, and he received his name and first meal, according to the rules of the Hindu Shastras. He was named Saroda Prasanna Mittra. Saroda's good qualities captivated the village. At the age of three he was brought down to his father's Calcutta residence and then the family removed permanently to Nandan Bagan. At twelve he was admitted to Seal's College of Calcutta, and the teachers were struck with wonder at his extraordinary intellect.

From his very childhood Saroda had been a great devotee. His father and mother were both very religious, the former

* Swami Prakashananda passed away on the 13th February, 1927—
 Ed.

passing whole days in worship. Beginning with his ninth year, Saroda helped his father in worship. They would both arise very early in the morning, Saroda going into the garden to pluck various flowers and then arranging them with Sandal, *Atapa* rice and other offerings for the services. When everything was ready he would sit at his father's side and listen attentively to the *mantras* and prayers. Saroda's memory was so powerful that within five years, from his ninth to his fourteenth year, he had memorized one hundred and eight Slokas with *pranams* and prayers. Furthermore, he could chant most beautifully the greater portions of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Upanishads, Chandi, and other sacred books. Thus his mind became more and more susceptible to the Divine Inspiration. When he finally came to sit at the feet of the Master, his real training for spiritual character began. To the illuminated vision of Sri Ramakrishna, of course, the contents of every mind were revealed in every detail. All weaknesses were at once apparent, and sooner or later he applied the specific remedy for their healing. It was only natural that each disciple, irresistibly drawn to the Master through a strong desire to realize the truth, should also carry with him as a heritage from his former life, tendencies which must be corrected or they would stand in the way of his spiritual progress.

In the home of Swami there had always been servants who did all the menial tasks and other work of the household. Unconsciously and otherwise as a result of this early training, Swami had held himself above menial tasks and brought this defect with him to Sri Ramakrishna. One unusually hot day, while visiting the Temple at Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna said: "Please bring some water and wash my feet." Swami stood stock still, rooted to the ground, a deepening flush rising to his forehead. Had he heard aright, were there not servants for such things? Seemingly not noticing his confusion, the Master repeated the request, and notwithstanding the presence of friends and others there was nothing to do but to comply. With this single act, through the Master's grace, the pride of caste was forever broken and the true spirit of selfless service, which was really one of his innate qualities, was from that time on placed at the disposal of his Master and all humanity.

Of the many wonderful experiences while living with the Master, which were to prepare him for his life work in carrying the truth to the world, one stands out in marked relief. One of the last arms of the ego to be cut off is sex, with all

of its subtle ramifications, and years of practice and asceticism are often necessary for its eradication. Swami had set his will to conquer this great foe, but the task seemed endless until, on a certain day, as he sat in meditation, he felt a definite motion of the Master's grace within and the idea of sex began to disappear like a mirage, never to return.

While he was attending college, he would frequently absent himself to go to the Temple at Dakshineswar. Suddenly he left the institution without the knowledge of his parents and began to work for the public good. Naturally this made him inattentive to his home and his parents tried to adopt means to end a state of things so foreign to their natural affections. This caused Saroda much suffering even at the outset of his life's mission. Nothing, however, could daunt his purpose. He was determined to offer his whole life to the service of humanity. This alarmed his parents, as they were endeavouring to have him marry. Saroda, however, would not listen to this, as his heart's desire was to relieve the distress of the wretched and the only way he considered that this could be accomplished was to help them to reach the state of Universal Truth. On January 3rd, 1886, he fled from his home, going to Sri Ramakrishna, but only stayed a short time with him and then left for Puri. Before leaving home, Saroda arranged all his affairs, even putting in many of his books slips denoting the parties from whom he borrowed them. He left this brief letter: "My dear parents, I will remain single throughout my life, as I do not wish to be entangled in any worldly conditions. Where my eyes and heart direct me, there will I go."

After this pilgrimage to Puri, Saroda returned to his home on February 12th, 1886, and at his parents' earnest request, as he was away only a month, he tried for and passed the First Art Examination. But the Voice called him again, and this time he left the worldly life completely to sit at the feet of the Master. No more entreaties could bring him back to the worldly life. He took the sacred vow and visited the holy places of Northern India. His father died shortly afterwards, yet though his love for kindred was deep, he was now a Sannyasin and he did not go into mourning.

Saroda's self-restraint and self-control were phenomenal. A single plantain a day would be his sole diet for a month, then again he would take about six pounds of food at a sitting without being affected in the least. On one occasion after a heavy dinner he ate four pounds of sweetmeats. Similar

incidents furnished the proof that he had his body and mind under absolute control.

After his pilgrimage to Puri, he traveled to other holy places, among them a number ordinarily inaccessible, but to him their inaccessibility was only an added incentive for accomplishment. Returning to Calcutta, he wrote the details of his journeys for the "Indian Mirror." He spent his time from then on reading and writing. In 1899, with the approval of Swami Vivekananda, he started publishing and editing the fortnightly magazine, "Udbodhan," containing articles on religion, social philosophy, science, agriculture and art. He kept this up for four years and, before leaving India for America, he had made the magazine very popular and well established, leaving it in the hands of Swami Suddhananda. For two years after his arrival in America, he continued to contribute articles until the growth of the work in San Francisco made this impossible.

When by reason of ill health, it became necessary for Swami Turiyananda to return to India, Dr. Logan, the president of the Vedanta Class at that time, wrote to Swami Vivekananda asking him to send another Swami to take charge of the Vedanta center. After a few months Swami replied saying that a new Swami, Trigunatita by name, was coming. Shortly thereafter a student received the following letter from Swami Turiyananda.

The Math,
Belur P.O.,
Howrah, India.
The 10th Sept., 1902.

My dear Prasuti :

Your kind letter came to hand. I think you ever so much of your words of sympathy at a time when I need them most. I am sorry I could not write to you in acknowledgment ere this. I was laid up after I reached here and have not recovered yet. The blow (the death of Swami Vivekananda) was very very hard for me as you rightly imagined. It was more so on account of my not being able to see him again even for a minute although I was on my way. However the will of Mother comes to pass always and we must learn to submit to Her decrees. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) gave up his body in Samadhi and we cannot call it an ordinary death. He has gone to enjoy the rest he needed so very badly after his hearty play. Those who shall prove faithful to his teachings will have all help from him still. Swami Trigunatita will start for San Francisco the next month. He is such a beautiful soul. He will be of great use to you all in matters Spiritual

and I am sure you all will spare nothing to make him feel quite at home when there. I hope you all are doing well in every way.

Kindly remember me to all the friends there and give them my best wishes and love.

With best wishes and love to you and yours as ever,

Yours in the Mother,

TURIYANANDA.

When the great call came to Swami Trigunatita from the Belur Math to leave the Motherland and cross the ocean to carry the message to America, he responded in the spirit of a Samnyasin and after a farewell reception, left Calcutta for America via Ceylon and Japan, arriving in San Francisco on January 2nd, 1903. The matter of dress for the new country he settled by going in oriental costume. On the question of food, he determined to maintain a strict vegetarian diet and not being able to get accurate information as to the vegetables and fruits grown in America, he went on his voyage with the resolution to live on bread and water if necessary. He afterwards found, of course, that vegetables and cereals of all kinds are grown in America in great abundance, but he came prepared to undergo any privation in his zeal for the cause.

(To be continued)

WOMEN OF INDIA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(Concluded from the last issue)

Thus say our books : direct the pre-natal influence. Why should mother be worshipped? Because she made herself pure. She underwent harsh penances sometimes to keep herself as pure as purity can be. For, mind you, no woman in India thinks of giving up her body to any man ; it is her own. The English, as a reform, have introduced at present what they call "Restitution of Conjugal rights," but no Indian would take advantage of it. When a man comes in physical contact with his wife, the circumstances she controls, through what prayers and through what vows! For that which brings forth the child is the holiest symbol of God himself. It is the greatest prayer between man and wife, the prayer that is going to bring into the world another soul fraught with a tremendous power for good or for evil. Is it a joke? Is it a simple nervous satis-

faction? Is it a brute enjoyment of the body? Says the Hindu: No, a thousand times, no!

But then, following that, there comes in another idea. The idea we started with was that the ideal is the love for the mother—herself all-suffering, all-forbearing. The worship that is accorded to the mother has its fountainhead there. She was a saint to bring me into the world; she kept her body pure, her mind pure, her food pure, her clothes pure, her imagination pure, for years, because I would be born. Because she did that she deserves worship. And what next follows? Linked with motherhood is wifhood.

You Western people are individualistic: I want to do this thing because I like it; I will elbow every one. Why? Because I like to. I want my own satisfaction, so I marry this woman. Why? Because I like her. This woman marries me. Why? Because she likes me. There it ends. She and I are the only two persons in the whole, infinite world, and I marry her and she marries me; nobody else is injured, nobody else responsible. Your Johns and your Janes may go into the forest and there they may live their lives; but when they have to live in society, their marriage means a tremendous amount of good or evil to us. Their children may be veritable demons, burning, murdering, robbing, stealing, drinking, hideous, vile.

So, what is the basis of the India's social order? It is the caste law. I am born for the caste; I live for the caste. I do not mean myself, because, having joined an Order, we are outside. I mean those that live in civil society. Born in the caste, the whole life must be lived according to caste regulation. In other words, in the present-day language of your country, the Western man is born individualistic, while the Hindu is socialistic—entirely socialistic. Now, then, the books say, if I allow you freedom to go about and marry any woman you like, and the woman to marry any man she likes, what happens? You fall in love; the father of the woman was, perchance, a lunatic or a consumptive. The girl falls in love with the face of a man whose father was a roaring drunkard. What says the law then? The law lays down that all these marriages would be illegal. The children of drunkards, consumptives, lunatics, etc., shall not be married. The deformed, humpbacked, crazy, idiotic—no marriage for them, absolutely none, says the law.

But the Mohammedan comes from Arabia and he has his own Arabian law; so the Arabian desert law has been forced upon us. The Englishman comes with his law; he forces it upon us, so far as he can. We are conquered. He says, "To-morrow

I will marry your sister." What can we do? Our law says, those that are born of the same family, though a hundred degrees distant, must not marry, that is illegitimate, it would deteriorate or make sterile the race. That must not be, and there it stops. So, I have no voice in my marriage, nor my sister. It is the caste that determines all that. We are married sometimes when children. Why? Because the caste says if they have to be married any way without their consent, it is better that they are married very early, before they have developed this love; if they are allowed to grow up apart, the boy may like some other girl, and the girl some other boy, and then something evil will happen; and so, says the caste, stop it there. I don't care whether my sister is deformed, or good looking, or bad looking: she is my sister, and that is enough; he is my brother, and that is all I need to know. So, they will love each other. You may say, "Oh, they lose a great deal of enjoyment—those exquisite emotions of a man falling in love with a woman, and a woman falling in love with a man. This is a sort of tame thing, loving each other like brothers and sisters, as though they have to." So be it, but the Hindu says, "We are socialistic. For the sake of one man's or woman's exquisite pleasure we don't want to load misery on hundreds of others."

There they are—married. The wife comes home with her husband; that is called the second marriage. Marriage at an early age is considered the first marriage, and they grow up separately with women and with their parents. When they are grown, there is a second ceremony performed, called a second marriage. And then they live together, but under the same roof with his mother and father. When she becomes a mother, she takes her place in turn as queen of the family group.

Now comes another peculiar Indian institution. I have just told you that in the first two or three castes the widows are not allowed to marry. They cannot even if they would. Of course, it is a hardship on many. There is no denying that not all the widows like it very much, because non-marrying entails upon them the life of a student. That is to say, a student must not eat meat or fish, nor drink wine, nor dress except in white clothes, and so on; there are many regulations. We are a nation of monks—always making penance, and we like it. Now, you see, a woman never drinks wine or eats meat. It was a hardship on us when we were students, but not on the girls. Our women would feel degraded at the

idea of eating meat. Men eat meat sometimes in some castes ; women never. Still, not being allowed to marry must be a hardship to many ; I am sure of that.

But we must go back to the idea ; they are intensely socialistic. In the higher castes of every country you will find the statistics show that the number of women is always much larger than the number of men. Why ? Because in the higher castes, for generation after generation, the women lead an easy life. They "neither toil nor spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them." And the poor boys, they die like flies. The girl has a cat's nine lives, they say in India. You will read in the statistics that they outnumber the boys in a very short time, except now when they are taking to work quite as hard as the boys. The number of girls in the higher castes is much larger than in the lower. Conditions are quite opposite in the lower castes. There they all work hard ; women a little harder sometimes, because they have to do the domestic work. But, mind you, I never would have thought of that, but one of your American travellers, Mark Twain, writes this about India : "In spite of all that Western critics have said of Hindu customs, I never saw a woman harnessed to a plow with a cow or to a cart with a dog, as is done in some European countries. I saw no woman or girl at work in the fields in India. On both sides and ahead (of the railway train) brown-bodied naked men and boys are plowing in the fields. But not a woman. In these two hours I have not seen a woman or a girl working in the fields." In India, even the lowest caste never does any hard work. They generally have an easy lot compared to the same class in other nations ; and as to plowing, they never do it.

Now, there you are. Among the lower classes, the number of men is larger than the number of women ; and what would you naturally expect ? A woman gets more chances of marriage, the number of men being larger.

Relative to such questions as to widows not marrying : among the first two castes, the number of women is disproportionately large, and here is a dilemma. Either you have a non-marriageable widow problem and misery, or the non-husband-getting young lady problem. To face the widow problem, or the old maid problem ! There you are ; either of the two. Now, go back again to the idea that the Indian mind is socialistic. It says, "Now, look here : we take the widow problem as the lesser one." Why ? "Because they have had their chance ; they have been married. If they have lost their

chance, at any rate they have had one. Sit down, be quiet, and consider these poor girls, they have not had one chance of marriage." Lord bless you! I remember once in Oxford Street, it was after ten o'clock, and all those ladies coming there, hundreds and thousands of them shopping, and some man, an American, looks around and he says, "My, how many of them will ever get husbands, I wonder!" So the Indian mind said to the widows, "Well, you have had your chance, and now we are very, very sorry that such mishaps have come to you, but we cannot help it ; others are waiting."

Then, religion comes into the question ; the Hindu religion comes in as a comfort. For, mind you, our religion teaches that marriage is something bad, it is only for the weak. The very spiritual man or woman would not marry at all. So the religious women say, "Well, the Lord has given me a better chance. What is the use of marrying? Thank God, worship God, what is the use of my loving man?" Of course, all of them cannot put the mind on God. Some find it simply impossible. They have to suffer ; but the other poor people, they should not suffer for them. Now, I leave this to your judgment ; but that is their idea in India.

Next, we come to woman as daughter. The great difficulty in the Indian household is the daughter. The daughter and caste combined ruin the poor Hindu, because, you see, she must marry in the same caste, and even inside the caste exactly in the same order, and so the poor man sometimes has to make himself a beggar to get his daughter married. The father of the boy demands a very high price for his son, and this poor man sometimes has to sell everything just to get a husband for his daughter. The great difficulty of the Hindu's life is the daughter. And, curiously enough the word daughter in Sanskrit is "duhita." The real derivation is that, in ancient times, the daughter of the family was accustomed to milk the cows, and so the word "duhita" comes from "dooha," to milk ; and the word "daughter" really means a milkmaid. Later on, they found a new meaning to that word, "duhita," the milkmaid ; she who milks away all the milk of the family. That is the second meaning.

These are the different relations held by our Indian women. As I have told you, the mother is the greatest in position, the wife is next, and the daughter comes after them. It is a most intricate and complicated series of graduation. No foreigner can understand it, even if he lives there for years. For instance, we have three forms of the personal pronoun ; they are a sort

of verbs in our language. One is very respectful, one is middling and the lowest is just like *thou* and *thee*. To children and servants the last is addressed. The middling one is used with equals. You see, these are to be applied in all the intricate relations of life. For example, to my elder sister I always throughout my life, use the pronoun *apani*, but she never does in speaking to me ; she says *tumi* to me. She should not, even by mistake, say *apani* to me, because that would mean a curse. Love, the love toward those that are superior, should always be expressed in that form of language. That is the custom. Similarly, I would never dare address my elder sister or elder brother, much less my mother or father, as *tu* or *tum* or *tumi*. As to calling our mother and father by name, why, we would never do that. Before I knew the customs of this country, I received such a shock when the son, in a very refined family, got up and called the mother by name ! However, I got used to that. That is the custom of the country. But with us, we never pronounce the name of our parents when they are present. It is always in the third person plural, even before them.

Thus we see the most complicated meshwork in the social life of our men and our women and in our degrees of relationship. We don't speak to our wives before our elders ; it is only when we are alone or when inferiors are present. If I were married, I would speak to my wife before my younger sister, my nephews or nieces ; but not before my elder sister or parents. I cannot talk to my sisters about their husbands at all. The idea is, we are a monastic race. The whole social organization has that one idea before it. Marriage is thought of as something impure, something lower. Therefore, the subject of love would never be talked of. I cannot read a novel before my sister, or my brothers, or my mother, or even before others. I close the book.

Then again, eating and drinking is all in the same category. We do not eat before superiors. Our women never eat before men, except they be the children or inferiors. The wife would die rather than, as she says, "munch" before her husband. Sometimes, for instance, brothers and sisters may eat together ; and if I and my sister are eating, and the husband come to the door, my sister stops, and the poor husband flies out.

These are the customs peculiar to the country. A few of these I note in different countries also. As I never married myself, I am not perfect in all my knowledge about the wife.

Mother, sisters—I know what they are ; and other people's wives I saw ; from that I gather what I have told you.

As to education and culture, it all depends upon the man. That is to say, where the men are highly cultured, there the women are ; where the men are not, women are not. Now, from the oldest times, you know, the primary education, according to the old Hindu custom, belongs to the village system. All the land from time immemorial was nationalized, as you say—belonged to the Government. There never is any private right in land. The revenue in India comes from the land, because every man holds so much land from the Government. This land is held in common by a community, it may be of five, ten, twenty, or a hundred families. They govern the whole of the land, pay a certain amount of revenue to the Government, maintain a physician, a village schoolmaster, and so on.

Those of you who have read Herbert Spencer remember what he calls the "monastery system" of education that was tried in Europe and which in some parts proved a success ; that is, there is one schoolmaster, which the village keeps. These primary schools are very rudimentary, because our methods are so simple. Each boy brings a little mat ; and his paper, to begin with, is palm leaves. Palm leaves first ; paper is too costly. Each boy spreads his little mat and sits upon it, brings out his inkstand and his books and begins to write. A little arithmetic, some Sanskrit grammar, a little of language and accounts, these are taught in the primary school.

A little book on ethics, taught by an old man, we learned by heart, and I remember one of the lessons :

"For the good of a village, a man ought to give up his family ;
 For the good of a country, he ought to give up his village ;
 For the good of humanity, he may give up his country ;
 For the good of the world, everything."

Such verses are there in the books. We get them by heart, and they are explained by teacher and pupil. These things we learn, both boys and girls together. Later on, the education differs. The old Sanskrit universities are mainly composed of boys. The girls very rarely went up to those universities ; but there are a few exceptions.

In these modern days there is a greater impetus towards higher education on the European lines, and the trend of opinion is strong towards women getting this higher education. Of course, there are some people in India who don't want it, but those who do want it carried the day. It is a strange fact that Oxford and Cambridge are closed to women to-day, so

are Harvard and Yale ; but Calcutta University opened its doors to women more than twenty years ago. I remember that the year I graduated several girls came out and graduated—the same standard, the same course, the same in everything as the boys ; and they did very well indeed. And our religion does not prevent a woman being educated at all. In this way the girl should be educated ; even thus she should be trained ; and in the old books we find that the universities were equally resorted to by both girls and boys, but later the education of the whole nation was neglected. What can you expect under foreign rule? The foreign conqueror is not there to do good to us ; he wants his money. I studied hard for twelve years and became a graduate of Calcutta University ; now I can scarcely make \$5.00 a month in my country. Would you believe it? It is actually a fact. So these educational institutions for foreigners are simply to get a lot of useful, practical slaves for a little money—to turn out a host of clerks, post-masters, telegraph operators, and so on. There it is.

As a result, education for both boys and girls is neglected, entirely neglected. There are a great many things that should be done in that land ; but you must always remember, if you will kindly excuse me and permit me to use one of your own proverbs, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." Your foreign-born ladies are always crying over the hardships of the Hindu woman, and never care for the hardships of the Hindu man. They are all weeping salt tears. But who are the little girls married to? Some one when told that they are all married to old men, asked, "And what do the young men do? What! are all the girls married to old men, only to old men?" We are born old—perhaps all the men there.

The ideal of the Indian race is freedom of the soul. This world is nothing. It is a vision, a dream. This life is one of many millions like it. The whole of this nature is *maya*, is phantasm, a pest house of phantasms. That is the philosophy. Babies smile at life and think it so beautiful and good, but in a few years they will have to revert to where they began. They began life crying, and they will leave it crying. Nations in the vigour of their youth think that they can do anything and everything: "We are the gods of the earth. We are the chosen people." They think that God Almighty has given them a charter to rule over all the world, to advance His plans, to do anything they like, to turn the world upside down. They have a charter to rob, murder, kill ; God has given them this.

and they do that because they are only babes. So empire after empire has arisen, glorious, resplendent, now vanished away—gone, nobody knows where: it may have been stupendous in its ruin.

As a drop of water upon a lotus leaf tumbles about and falls in a moment, even so is this mortal life. Everywhere we turn are ruins. Where the forest stands today was once the mighty empire with huge cities. That is the dominant idea, the tone, the colour of the Indian mind. We know you Western people have the youthful blood coursing through your veins. We know that nations like men have their day. Where is Greece. Where is Rome? Where that mighty Spaniard of the other day? Who knows through it all what becomes of India? Thus they are born and thus they die; they rise and fall. The Hindu as a child knows of the Mogul invader whose cohorts no power on earth could stop, who has left in your language the terrible word "Tartar." The Hindu has learned his lesson. He does not want to prattle, like the babes of to-day. Western people, say what you have to say. This is your day. Onward, go on, babes; have your prattle out. This is the day of the babes, to prattle. We have learned our lesson, and are quiet. You have a little wealth to-day and you look down upon us. Well, this is your day. Prattle, babes, prattle—this is the Hindu's attitude.

The Lord of Lords is not to be attained by much frothy speech. The Lord of Lords is not to be attained even by the powers of the intellect. He is not gained by much power of conquest. That man who knows the secret source of things and that everything else is evanescent, unto him He, the Lord, comes; unto none else. India has learned her lesson through ages of experience. She has turned her face towards Him. She has made many mistakes; loads and loads of rubbish are heaped upon the race. Never mind; what of that? What is the clearing of rubbish, the cleaning of cities, and all that? Does that give life? Those that have fine institutions, they die. And what of institutions, these tin-plate Western institutions, made in five days and broken on the sixth? One of these little handful nations cannot keep alive for two centuries together. And our institutions have stood the test of ages. Says the Hindu: "Yes, we have buried all the old nations of the earth and stand here to bury all the new races also, because our ideal is not this world, but the other. Just as your ideal is, so shall you be. If your ideal is mortal, if your ideal is of this earth, so shalt thou be. If your ideal is matter,

matter shalt thou be. Behold! our ideal is the Spirit. That alone exists. Nothing else exists, and like Him, we live forever."

THE WEST TURNS TO THE EAST FOR LIGHT

By HAROLD CALLENDER

The lure of the East has, ever since the Crusades, exerted a powerful attraction over the imagination of the West. The enticement of splendor and riches, the fascination of the exotic and mysterious, hold a perennial appeal. But this lure has acquired, in the last few years, a new and special glamour. If the caravans and galleons that once set off in quest of gold and spices, of ivory, apes and peacocks, have been succeeded by less picturesque vessels bearing less adventurous pilgrims to lands of rubber, oil and copra, the roads to the Orient have served again—as in the Middle Ages—to bring into contact two remote and very different types of culture. European philosophers and writers, disillusioned and dispirited by the plight of war-enfeebled Europe, have turned their faces to the East in search of light and inspiration.

George Canning, on a historic occasion slightly more than a century ago, determined to call in the New World to redress the balance of the Old. To-day the Old World is urged to appeal to a still older one—not to restore a deranged political equilibrium, but to supply the spiritual stimulus for the creation of a better European civilization than that which went to smash, as some believe, between the years 1914 and 1918.

As a consequence of this debacle in the Occident, and the revelation of Western weaknesses that it signified for the Orient, the "changeless East" apparently has lost some of its respect for Europe. Various writers familiar with Asia have prophesied a revolt against Western ideas and Western rule. Lothrop Stoddard has supplied an alarming vision of a "Rising Tide of Color"—of yellow, brown and black races, all impatient to throw off the yoke of the white man. This is taken to be the result partly of the loss of European prestige entailed by the war, partly of the implanting in Oriental minds of the Western conceptions of democracy and self-determination which formed part of our wartime ideology. When British transports loaded with troops were being hurried to China a few months ago Winston Churchill made a speech in which he accused American missionaries of stirring up the Chinese.

While the Western World—particularly those parts of it possessing political and economic interests in the East—is thus disturbed by the spectres of Lenin and Gandhi there come from European prophets the summons and the warning that if Europe is to survive its present disabilities it must take lessons in philosophy from the East. To Kipling the Orient represented a curious and colorful setting for the display of British military valor and administrative genius. To Conrad it offered a useful background for the study of human character and emotions, Eastern and Western. To Pierre Loti it supplied a sensually enticing escape from accustomed surroundings. To officials in London and Washington it is chiefly a political problem. But to those Europeans who have been captivated by the Vedas and Upanishads the East holds a promise of a vital renewal and a spiritual force which Europe desperately needs but is now incapable of supplying for itself.

After two centuries of Crusades had blazed the paths to the East and taught Europeans how to organize expeditions to get there, Europe began to stir from its medieval lethargy. Merchants followed soldiers. Fleets crossed to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, whence caravans brought variegated wares—among them a novel material called cotton—from Asia. The newly opened intercourse with the East led Columbus to seek a shorter route by sailing westward. The whole Mediterranean Basin, and even the interior of Europe, were galvanized into activity. Trade thrived and flowed into new channels. The fairs of Lyons, the Champagne, Flanders and Germany blossomed from the impulse of the rediscovered East. The Europe of to-day, if not on the verge of another dark age, as has been suggested, is at any rate badly battered and shell-shocked. It needs, if it ever did, a faith in its own future, a reassuring impulse from somewhere. And once more there is a hopeful scanning of the roads leading to the East.

Nearly a year before the armistice Lord Lansdowne wrote a public letter urging that the war be stopped as soon as possible, while there still was something left of Europe. What was left in Germany at the end of the war has been succinctly described by Thomas Mann. "The German people," he wrote in 1925, "are far from having completely recovered from a physical and moral collapse such as has doubtless never been known before in the entire course of history." And again: "After extraordinary exploits the force for the performance of which was their belief in themselves," the Germans gave in to two "terrible weapons"—the blockade and the propaganda that

understand their morale. "What followed was an unexampled downfall, an unconditional capitulation, the yielding of a moral fortress. * * * The demoralization was complete. It was manifest in the profound and almost moral anxiety of an entire people which despaired of itself, of its history, of its supreme values."

If the Germans, for a time, lost faith in themselves and in their culture, many in the allied countries lost faith in Europe and its civilization, the unity of which had been so thoroughly shattered by the conflict. The recent gay parade of the American Legion under the Arc de Triomphe led a French writer to observe, addressing the Americans: "For you the war was an incident. It is now past and you can hold a jollification. But we French have not yet come out of the war."

Germany was not the only nation that suffered a moral wound that heals slowly. Among the French today one finds a great deal of disquietude as to the future of France. The number of times that the word "security" has been used in French discussions of international affairs may be taken as a measure of this state of mind.

At the very moment when Europe was at its lowest point of doubt and depression a prophet appeared with the comforting message that it was no use worrying, since the Occident was about done for in any case. "The comparative study of cultures," announced Oswald Spengler, author of "The Decline of Western Civilization," "proves that we are in our old age. The hour of destiny has sounded, inexorable destiny against which it would be folly to rebel." So he undertook to formulate "the final philosophy of the Occident," which should serve to prepare for the end by "re-educating in us the social instinct of death."

History, said Spengler, is the story of the rise and fall of cultures, each following a fairly fixed cycle. Ours approaches its finish. He examined all the previous cultures at great length to make the case quite clear, so that no informed person need pass a happy life in the foolish illusion that European civilization had a future worth mentioning. The book supplied a kind of rational justification of the existing despair and consequently proved very popular and provoked much discussion.

Europe—that is, a large number of the intellectually curious—then began to take a new interest in the East. If Western civilization was about to go under, the reasonable course was to take Spengler's tip and try to hook up with some going concern. After all, the Orient did exhibit odd powers of resist-

ance. Did not half a dozen Indian fakirs go about Europe pouring molten lead into their mouths and sticking knives into their bodies? Rabindranath Tagore toured Europe and found many sympathetic listeners. Romain Rolland, who had done biographies of Michelangelo, Tolstoy and Beethoven, now wrote a life of Gandhi. Coomaraswamy responded to the curiosity about the East with books on Oriental philosophies and religions. Europeans and Americans made pilgrimages to Santiniketan, Tagore's home in India, and to other revered places in the East.

Henri Massis, in his essay, "Défense de l'Occident," recently published in Paris by the Librairie Plon, presents a scholarly analysis of the views of the more influential contemporary writers who have come under the spell of Eastern thought and civilization.

Europe, whether it was to fulfill Spengler's program or not, was regarded by some as a very narrow and stuffy place. "There are a certain number of us in Europe for whom the civilization of Europe no longer suffices," confessed Rolland, and Count Hermann Keyserling found that "Europe does not stimulate me any longer. It is a world that is too familiar to supply new forms to my existence ; it is too limited. All of Europe today is of but a single mind. I want to escape toward spaces where my life, in order to subsist, must transform itself."

So Keyserling escaped to the larger and more congenial East. It happened that shortly afterward another philosophic Marco Polo who entertained no very high estimate of Europe did likewise. He was Bertrand Russell. One of the most curious aspects of this new cult of the Orient in Europe is the fact that it has been embraced in different ways by both Keyserling and Russell. It would scarcely be possible for two men to possess more widely divergent temperaments or habits of thought. Yet Russell, the mathematician and realist, and Keyserling, the mystic, agree in the conviction that Europe requires a new or very much changed civilization and that it can profit by studying the manner in which the problems of life are met in the Orient.

Russell believes that the way to discover truth is by the application of disciplined thought. In philosophy he undertook to introduce the logic of pure mathematics into the realms of metaphysics and psychology. His was a mind that one might have expected to prove entirely immune to the spell of the East, which is permeated by the occult. Russell did not, of course, derive any such psychic thrills as Keyserling did from the intuitive philosophies of the Orient, but he came back an

admirer of the Chinese. He referred in one of his essays to the "instinctive happiness which makes China a paradise after the fierce weariness of our distracted and trivial civilization."

"China," he concluded, "has shortcomings which to us are very obvious, but it also has merits in which we are deficient. What is to be hoped is not that China should become like ourselves, reproducing our Napoleons and Bismarcks and Eminent Victorians, but that a new civilization should be developed, combining our knowledge with Chinese culture. The Chinese are capable of that. * * * If their development can be left free, I think they can give the world a new civilization to carry on the arts and sciences after Europe has perished in a sea of blood."

Keyserling is perhaps better known in the English-speaking countries than any of the other apostles of Oriental mysticism. In his "Travel Diary of a Philosopher," a fascinating book, he has described his absorption in the East and its thought. He is high-strung, nervous, a typical mystic. He regards himself as a prophet whose mission it is to enable those capable of understanding him to achieve "perfect self-realization," upon the principles of the Eastern mystics. While he often talks for hours at a time, he calls discussion "a sin against wisdom." It is personal contacts that count. One does not acquire the truth through the intellect, nor communicate it by that means.

"I had," said Keyserling, "the mentality of the European who, to be born to historic life, required at last that all the old States of Europe collapse. So I sought to ignore the war and during a year I lived in a state of interior detachment. My personality acquired more vigor. Like a volcano, it hurled forth its energy. * * * My spiritual dynamism is so strong that it is impossible to endure it more than three days."

Keyserling says: "We are entering upon a new epoch, similar to that which marked the first centuries after Christ. Then all sorts of reactions took place, and the Orient and the Occident united. And now, as then, the result will be an enlarging of the bases of life."

At the School of Wisdom in Darmstadt, Keyserling permits his devotees to profit by his experiences and his insight into the processes of history. Thus they may give "new significance" to their lives. The meeting at the school in 1921 "solved the problem of the relationship of eternal significance toward the ever-changing appearance of outward fact and form." Tagore was present and no doubt helped in the task. The following year another problem, that of "the heroic

Western modality of life," was disposed of without great difficulty.

Maurice Maeterlinck has referred to the Western and Eastern cultures as two lobes of the human brain. "The one produces reason, science, consciousness; the other secretes intuition, religion, the subconscious. One reflects the infinite and unknowable; the other heeds only what it can limit, what it can understand. * * * * They have tried more than once to interpenetrate, to join, to work in concert; but the Western lobe, at least on the most active part of our globe, has so far paralyzed and almost annihilated the efforts of the other. * * * It is time to reawaken the paralyzed Eastern lobe."

"Asia will conquer us as Rome and Athens once conquered—by the mind," predicted Rolland. "The night falls upon Europe," wrote Walter Rathenau shortly before his death. "More and more everything obliges us to look to the East. * * * Here is the great result of the war, the great tragedy that our children will not even understand."

"Examine the poetry of to-day," said Hermann Hesse. "You will see everywhere the same affinity with Dostoevsky. The ideal of the 'Brothers Karamazov,' and old Asiatic ideal marked by occultism, is becoming little by little the European ideal and tends to overwhelm the Occidental spirit."

"The awakening metaphysical conscience," wrote professor Robert Ernt Curtius of Bonn, "sought in the spirit of the East a sanction, a nourishment, a fecundating force. Taoism is at present the secret religion of an élite of our youth."

"The columns of German-Latin civilization are quaking," wrote Dr. Paquet in the *Neue Rundschau* six years ago. "The work of Slavic-German reconstruction progresses. Under the spiritual influence of the Orient, which is reawakening and animating Europeans with the feelings of primitive India and its millennial wisdom, a new moral order is forming in the Occident."

Having suffered defeat, the Germans seem to have been especially susceptible to the call of the East. "The German mind, like the German territory, is open towards both the West and the East," said Curtius. Russian art has taken a prominent place in Germany, and the German Republic's political policies wavered for a time between the West and the East. Some of the most enthusiastic utterances in favour of Slavic and Oriental ideals have coincided with the tendency toward a German-Russian alliance, but the re-establishment of comparatively normal relations between Germany and her former

enemies has been reflected in a diminution of emphasis upon the value of Eastern ways. "During and after the war," said Mann, "we gave ourselves to the Orient of Dostoevsky. * * * The rectification of a tendency whose exclusivism was dangerous to the national mind has undoubtedly begun. Germany begins again to look to the West."

The protagonists of a sympathetic study of Eastern thought represent it as a return "to the alma mater," to first sources. Did not Christianity and our own civilization develop from Eastern origins? Western civilization has broken down and must go back to its base for repairs, so to speak. It has run out of inspiration and must send to the East for a new supply. Comparing the "dissolution of personality" that he finds manifest in the writings of the young disciples of Proust and Gide with the attitude of the Eastern mystics, M. Massis adds: "Lassitude of a generation prematurely stricken, which no discipline of intelligence and heart defends against a feeling of powerlessness—here is where Orientalism threatens." He recalls the cultural unity of Europe in the Middle Ages and urges a return to Latin culture and the Church.

Being largely a product of the disillusionment and the moral damage caused by the war,* the European cult of the East may decline with the recovery of Europe—especially if this recovery is accompanied by the achievement of reasonable guarantees against the disruption by another war of the degree of unity and the sense of common interest that the continent now possesses.†

REVIEW

ART AS WILL AND IDRA by C. Jinarajadasa. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 197. Price wrappers 14 as.*

The booklet is a collection of six short essays and lectures, all dealing with art from various angles of vision. To Mr. Jinarajadasa art is akin to religion, nay religion itself. Art, according to him, is the method of elevating the everyday realities and experiences to the spiritual level. And he very ably points out its supreme function in the individual and national life. Mr. Jinarajadasa always writes fascinatingly. This small book is quite pleasant and profitable reading.

* But the European cult of the East is of much earlier origin and born of quite other causes than the last war.—Ed., P. B.

† From *The New York Times Magazine*.

THE RELIGION OF ZARATHUSTRA by I. J. S. Taraporewala, B.A., Ph.D., Bar-at-Law. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, Pp. 180. Price wrappers Rs. 1/12.

The learned writer has attempted in this book to present the essential elements of his Faith to non-Zoroastrians. The nine chapters dividing the book gives an account of the ancient Iranians, of the Prophet Zoroaster, his doctrines, the "Holy Immortals" and "Adorable Ones" of the Faith, its rites and ceremonies and its past and future. The writer has often pointed out the fundamental unity of Zoroastrian Faith and Vedic Religion. The work is interesting and instructive and we recommend it to all who want a general idea of this ancient religion. It is furnished with an appendix and index.

THE BHAGAVAD- GITA OR THE LORD'S SONG with the Text in Devanagari and an English translation by Annie Besant. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price 4 as.

This translation has become well-known so much so that already ninety-five thousand copies of it have been sold. The publishers have done a great service to the Hindu religion by making such wide circulation possible by their cheap prints. The present, sixth, edition has brought out 10,000 copies. We do hope these will be soon sold out. By the way, could not the publishers use better paper?

THE THEOSOPHIST'S ATTITUDE TO DEATH AND THE UNSEEN; TO NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM; TO SCIENCE AND ITS MESSAGE; AND TO ART AND THE ARTS. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Price wrappers Re. 1/- Pp. 104.

The book contains four lectures delivered respectively by the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater, the Rt. Rev. G. S. Arundale, M.A., LL.B., D.L., Yadunandan Prasad, M.A. (All. and Cam.), B.Sc. (Lond.) and C. Jinarajadasa, M.A. at the Theosophical Society's Convention at Benares in December, 1926. The subjects as the title of the book implies have been treated from the Theosophical standpoint. The lectures are thought-provoking.

THE PATH TO PEACE by James H. Cousins, D.Litt. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 60.

The sub-title of the booklet is "An Essay on Cultural Interchange and India's Contribution thereto with a Prefatory Note on 'Mother India.'" The preface was widely published in the Indian press some-time ago. *The Path to Peace* is a noble homage to India's greatness. The writer has studied India with penetrating intelligence and sympathetic imagination; and hence his sure grasp of India's true nature.

The essay which was published in July, 1926, in *The New Orient* (New York), though small in size, is full of insight and reveals a clear grasp of the world-situation. We are inclined to think that the sub-title is not quite apposite; for it is not so much an *interchange* of culture that the author pleads as the need of acceptance by the West

of the intuitional culture of India. He finds the civilisation of the West inadequate. He points out by a rapid survey of modern Europe how the effect of Western civilisation has been "to invert the pyramid of life; to depress the spiritual apex and exalt the material base."

There are several kinds of cultures;—pre-eminently physical; æsthetic, as of Greece; mental as of modern West; and intuitional, as of India. "The lesson of Greece is the insufficiency of the æsthetical. Man cannot live by art alone. The lesson of modern Europe is the insufficiency of the commercial. Man cannot live by business alone." "A mental civilisation is an organised individualism. Its motto is, 'Every man for himself.' . . . Its political expression is imperialism; its intellectual expression is science. . . . Its main concern is with the materials of life and the organisation of their production and transit for personal profit. Its motto is, 'Business is business.' "

"Is there any hope? Beyond the civilisations that have sprung from the emotional and mental aspects of life is there possible another civilisation . . . rising . . . from the spiritual root of humanity? . . . Such a civilisation must be elaborated out of the response of the intuitional aspect of humanity.... . ." "Such a civilisation," answers the author, "is that of Vedic India."

Yes, the Vedantic culture is the hope of the West and of mankind. Every Indian should carefully read this small profound book.

THE PATH TO PERFECTION by *Swami Ramakrishnananda*. *Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras*. Pp. 23. Price 4 as.

This is the 3rd edition of this beautiful booklet, giving within a short space the quintessence of the Vedantic quest. The get-up is excellent.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna

The birthday anniversary (*Janmatithi*) of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on Thursday, the 23rd February.

Vedanta Centre at St. Louis

We are glad that mainly through the efforts of Swami Prabhavananda, a new Vedanta Society has been established at St. Louis in U. S. A. The Swami went there on invitation last October and during his short stay there delivered a series of lectures and held several classes, which were all very well attended. The enthusiasm which was evoked encouraged him to organise a permanent Society, and already quite a large number have become its members. The Swami were to visit Chicago also for the purpose of Vedantic propaganda; but he fell ill and had to return to Portland which is the permanent centre of his activity. It is expected that a Swami will soon take charge of the St. Louis centre.



Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य ब्रह्मनिवाप्त ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 14.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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No. 3.

RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The following notes as also those which will be published in our future issues, are of some class talks which the Swami gave to an intimate audience in the home of Mrs. Sara C. Bull, a devoted American disciple. These were preserved by her for her personal use and were finally printed in 1913 for private circulation among friends. These are now being presented to the public for the first time. Readers will find in them many valuable hints of practical spirituality.—*Editor.*

Raja Yoga is as much a science as any in the world. It is an analysis of the mind, gathering the facts of the supersensuous world, and so building up the spiritual world. All the great spiritual teachers the world has known said, "I see and I know." Jesus, Paul and Peter all claimed actual perception of the spiritual truths they taught.

This perception is obtained by Yoga.

Neither memory nor consciousness can be the limitation of existence. There is a superconscious state ; both it and the unconscious state are sensationless, but with a vast difference between them,—the difference between ignorance and knowledge. Present Yoga as an appeal to reason, as a science.

Concentration of the mind is the source of all knowledge.

Yoga teaches us to make matter our slave, as it ought to be. Yoga means *yoke*, to join, that is, to join the soul of man with the Supreme Soul.

Mind acts in and under consciousness. What we call consciousness is only one link in the infinite chain that is our nature.

This "I" of ours covers just a little consciousness and a vast amount of unconsciousness, while over it, and mostly unknown to it, is the superconscious plane.

Through faithful practice, layer after layer of mind opens before us, and each reveals new facts to us. New worlds are as it were created before us and new powers are put into our hands ; but we must not stop by the way, or allow ourselves to be dazzled by these "beads of glass" when the mine of diamonds lies before us.

God alone is our goal ; failing to reach God, we die.

Three things are necessary to the student who wishes to succeed.

First. Give up all ideas of enjoyment in this world and the next, care only for God and Truth.

Second. Intense desire to know truth and God. Be eager for them, long for them, as a drowning man longs for breath.

Third. The six trainings: First—Restraining the mind from going outward. Second—Turning the mind inward, fastening it to one idea. Third—Suffering everything without murmuring. Fourth—Want only God, take nothing, else ; let not seeming cheat you any longer. Turn from all and seek only God. Fifth—Take the subject before you and think it out ; never leave it. Do not count time. We are to know truth, not for enjoyment ; leave that to brutes who enjoy as we never can. Man is a thinking being and must struggle on until he conquers death, until he sees the light. He must not spend himself in vain talking that bears no fruit. Worship of society and popular opinion is idolatry. Soul has no sex, no country, no place, no time. Sixth—Think constantly of your real nature. Get rid of superstition. Do not hypnotize yourself into a belief in your own inferiority ; tell yourself day and night what you really are until you realize, actually realize, your oneness with God.

Without these disciplines, no results can be gained.

We can be conscious of the Absolute, but we can never

express it. The moment we try to express it, we limit it and it ceases to be absolute.

We have to go beyond sense limit and transcend even reason, and we have the power to do this.

RECONSTRUCTING INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

It is undeniable that there has been a general awakening of our countrymen to the consciousness of the urgent necessity of national service. It is felt that if India is to be saved as an integral nation, high in honour and utility, we must lift up the nation from its present degradation. The policy of drift will not do. Enthusiasm we have to a certain degree, though much more and a more sustained variety of it is still wanted. *What is urgently needed is a clear understanding by our workers of India as a whole.* There are many who are content with mere political work. There are others who are busy with the economic aspect only. Others are given to education, others again to mere spiritual service. It is true that all these are useful works and are serving to bring about national rehabilitation ; and also that decentralisation in national work is necessary. But it is not less true that there should be a co-ordination of the different sides of the work, and that all workers, especially the leaders, should have a clear idea of India as a synthetic whole, of the interrelations of its various aspects and especially of India's future. We must learn to infer what the future of India and the direction of its development will be. It is the vision of the future that can truly guide our present activity and tell us which tendencies are to be curbed and which to be developed, and shed light in the darkest hours of despair. We shall try, according to our light, to envisage the future and point out its direction, and suggest ways and means in general terms.

If India is to rise as a nation, a united whole, the very first necessity is the unity of the different warring communities. That unity can be brought about by two means : by pacts, that is to say, on political and contractual basis ; or by evolving a unitary synthetic consciousness among all races and creeds, which of course can only be spiritual. The first method, though it will be necessary to a certain degree, especially in the

material affairs of the nation, concerns, in our opinion, only a fraction of the main problem. No nation can stand on mere pacts. There must be an inner consciousness of a common ideal, common struggle and common feeling among the different constituents of the nation. That indeed is true nationhood. What can be the power behind this unity of purpose and striving? Many suggest that the consciousness of the common mother-country or the common state should be that motive power. We think that this is quite a flimsy basis and can scarcely supply the power and inspiration required to build up the common nationhood. We must specially remember that the consciousness of the supreme and ultimate reality of the spiritual quest is so strong among all sections of the Indian people that patriotism will scarcely be able to supplant it in their mind. The only possible course therefore is to make the spiritual quest itself the motive power of Indian nationalism. The ideal and the inspiration of all our national struggles should be the realisation of spirituality, whatever the form the striving may take. All national functions should be made to contribute to this realisation as far as possible, for, of course there are certain collective functions which can but be predominantly material in form and purpose, such as national defence, expansion of commerce, diplomacy, etc.

How to bring about this spiritual unity? Fortunately, every community in India already believes in the spiritual ideal of life. What is wanted is the intensification of this belief and the removal of the fanciful bars that now needlessly separate the different communities and do not allow them to feel the unity of their ideal and collective purpose and of their struggles, individual and collective. Who will undertake the clearance of these imaginary barriers? Of course all communities can and must do and are actually doing it to a certain degree. But it can be fairly stated that of all races and creeds in India and abroad, Hinduism is most suited and able to take up this work. Hinduism is most synthetic in genius and outlook and most intensely spiritual. Its history and aptitude both fit it to take up leadership in founding the basis of Indian nationhood. The idea of the harmony of religions has to be spread broadcast, showing the equal efficacy and validity of all religions and religious cultures and the stupidity of religious antagonism. This will produce a mental change in the communities and bring them closer. But mere mental change is not enough. Some change in the externals is also necessary. What is wanted is a unitary body, one both in spirit and form.

Not mere co-ordination, but synthesis is what is wanted. To that end, we must conceive an all-India society of which all the different races and creeds will form parts. That is to say, we want not merely spiritual synthesis, but also social synthesis. In this Hinduism alone can be useful. Hinduism is ready to admit Christian, Muhammadan or Zoroastrian religious ideals as components of herself. In fact all these ideals already exist in Hinduism in one form or another. New forms of spiritual realisation also Hinduism is ready to assimilate. So also the different scriptures. No other religion possesses the assimilative genius in the same measure as Hinduism. In fact all except Hinduism are dogmatic and fixed in their conception of religious ideals. So Hinduism must assimilate other religions, not by destroying, but by making them component parts of itself. This will furnish the basis of Indian unity and even world unity. The Hindu religious outlook admitting the truth and efficacy of all religions, will furnish the spiritual basis of the synthesis ; the Vedanta philosophy synthesising all different religious ideals into a system, will furnish the intellectual basis ; and the institution of caste, allowing social and cultural autonomy to the different constituent races and communities, will furnish the social basis.

We must not forget, however, that Hinduism in the present ultra-conservative mood, is scarcely fitted to undertake and accomplish this great task. Before it can assimilate other races and creeds, it itself must become liberal and resume its historical function and elasticity. We have shown in some of our previous articles that such assimilation of new elements is nothing new with Hinduism. Hinduism has done this time and again ; and had it not been for the interposition of the British rule, the work of assimilating Muhammadanism would have been far advanced by this time. The advent of the Christian power has added only one more element to the task of Hinduism. The disruption of the Mughal empire and the establishment of a new sovereignty paralysed the collective functioning of Hinduism for a time. Hinduism has waked up again and resumed its ancient function, the assimilation of new races and creeds and cultures. What is the assimilative method of Hinduism ? This is nothing but the enunciation of Hinduism as the fundamentals of spiritual life. It is by emphasising the essentials of spirituality, *in profession as well as practice*, that Hinduism becomes attractive and assimilative. We have to emphasise the essentials again and enunciate Hinduism as it really is, that is, as basic principles of all religious ideals and

methods ; which means that we must minimise ritualism. In *practice* also, the essentials of spirituality must find clearer and more direct expression.

We must first unify Hinduism. The ritualistic differences that divide the different sects have to be reduced to the shortest limit possible. The different sectarian scriptures have to be synthesised. We know how Swami Vivekananda discovered the common bases of Hinduism and preached the unity of the different Hindu philosophies. He thereby indicated the way towards Hindu synthesis. He said that in one, the most essential respect, all the different Hindu sects are one ;—it is in the conception of the Atman. Amidst all the different ways of expressing it, there is the common idea that the goal is that realisation in which one finds oneself endowed with perfection, infinitude and all blessed qualities. The Advaita philosophy, of course, enunciates the nature of the Atman in the most logical fashion. But in spite of formal differences, all the various sects substantially agree. So we must minimise ritualism, feel the unity of the different sectarian scriptures, and last of all, preach the glory of the Atman. This last item, we shall see later on, has great significance and importance.

The self-assertion of Hinduism as essentials of spirituality will react on two planes. It will, on the one hand, assimilate alien cultures and religious ideals, and on the other, produce internal social liberalism and assimilate alien social units. When the Hindu outlook has freed itself of narrownesses, it will discover a close similarity between its own spiritual ideals and those of other races and nations. Hinduism will also become bold and will not seek to merely protect itself with crude devices of "don't-touch-ism." It will clear off those accretions that are obstructing the free flow of its life. It will also become socially adventurous ; it will not fear to shake off its internal weaknesses ; it will at once promote many castes to higher social positions for which they are fit and insistent. It will do away with what Swami Vivekananda used to call 'kitchen religion' ; and will remove the innumerable social barriers that have weakened the society and is obstructing the growth of unity in the everyday practical life. It will also easily allow new races to find admission into its social fold.

This, in our opinion, is the only possible way to achieve real national unity. We are aware that this will be a slow process. Political nationality will be quicker to achieve. But political nationalism is only the surface of that real nationhood which we have in view. Even political workers must not forget

this. They must remember that what Indian history is aiming at is not mere political nationality, the establishment of a mere state in India by means of pacts and compromises, but a solid, real, spiritual nationality ; and that the realisation of this nationhood is possible only through the reawakening of Hinduism as an all-India spiritual and cultural synthesis and through assimilation by it of the outlying races, creeds and cultures.

The second problem that faces India is how to accumulate such amount of strength as will succeed in achieving all the political, social, industrial, educational, cultural and spiritual progress that is needed to make India stand the onslaughts of foreign peoples and grow into the greatest and most prosperous of nations. Strength, infinite strength is wanted to achieve all this. No, India will not remain a hermit nation ; she never was and never will be. India's ideal is all-round development. India shall be politically, industrially, socially, intellectually, culturally and spiritually great, as great as the greatest of nations. India does not lack means and materials. Which land is so endowed with every facility as India ? What is wanted therefore is an upheaval of tremendous *rajasic* activity. Unfortunately we are so placed that our beginning must be through a call on the power of the spirit. When other, external, sources of power have gone dry, our only resource is to invoke that which is the repository of all strength, the spirit, the Atman. It is by appealing to the infinite potentiality of the spirit that we shall succeed in getting the power requisite for the above-mentioned purposes. Therefore we must appeal to the Atman. We must go from door to door and tell all men and women, high and low, that they have infinite strength lying within them, and that they must call it forth and apply it to their daily life. They must be filled with the idea of the infinite power of the spirit that they may overcome all fear of obstructions and may not give way to despair. This is the main way in which the nation can be endowed with requisite strength to fight its way on ; and this will bring back the lost prosperity to the land.

We are inclined to believe that the next hundred years in India will be a period of tremendous *rajasic* activity. India is bound to be industrialised and will most possibly follow the West in this respect. Education will be wide-spread. Social cohesion will greatly increase, and there will be a mighty growth of military power, for India's geographical position is such that it can scarcely save itself from another fall without military

greatness. These changes will undoubtedly bring great material happiness to the nation. But there is also the fear of a danger, that of eventual neglect and rejection of India's eternal spiritual culture. But of course there are also some safeguards. First of all, *much depends on the motive power of the upheaval*. If it be predominantly political or industrial, as in Japan, the degradation of the spiritual ideal is inevitable. If, however, the national awakening is brought about through spiritual resurgence, by the awakening of Hinduism through spiritual means and by the evoking of power through preaching the Divinity of the human soul, *the upheaval of rajasic activity is bound to be, to some extent, idealistic in nature and content, and lead, when material prosperity has been gained, to pure spiritual heights*. Secondly, the national workers may be expected to be guided more and more by the spirit of Karma Yoga. This also will have a restraining effect. Thirdly, there is that in India's atmosphere and tradition, which will not allow India even in the heyday of material prosperity to forget its divine tendencies and mission. This is a great hope indeed. But these indirect and passive safeguards are not enough to keep India faithful to its eternal ideals. The future Indian nation is bound to be democratic in outlook ; and when prosperity and opportunity for material aggrandisement will come, the masses may probably follow in the wake of the West and enact the policy of Japan. And also unfortunately the Brahman-Non-Brahman quarrels and the rigours of untouchability which are so slow in yielding to sanity, are embittering the minds of the lower classes who will naturally have a strong and determining voice in the future state, and they may, unless they are assuaged in the mean time, vent their bitterness in an antagonism to spiritual ideals generally associated with the higher castes.

For all these reasons, it is necessary that from the very start there should be also a strengthening of the direct safeguard which is nothing but holding the spiritual ideal pure and bright before the rising and growing nation. That is to say, there must be a section of the people who would essentially dedicate themselves to the spiritual ideal and will at the same time embody the best aspirations of the nation. Other-worldly spirituality will fail to attract the homage of the nation and become its guide at this juncture of its history. For this, therefore, there should not only be a large number of monks, spiritual, learned, cultured and active in the spirit of Karma Yoga and serviceful to the nation in every respect, but also a large

number of householders who would be equally spiritual and serviceful as the monks. They will guide the national strivings in the proper direction and save them from the dangers of materialism.

It is our belief that after this century of rajasic activity and achievement, the Indian nation will be filled with a predominance of *sattva*, spiritual strength, calmness and illumination. By that time, it is hoped, the other parts of the world also will come to realise the futility and stupidity of material aggrandisement and remodel individual and collective life on spiritual foundations. India then will be able to realise and settle down to a more peaceful social economy and political activity. Till other parts of the world have risen to the spiritual plane, India cannot live an entirely spiritual life, much though it is desirable. *It is therefore the further duty of India to instruct the world in the spiritual ways, for her own sake, if not for theirs, and help them to realise a nobler conception of life.*

We have so far discussed the *spirit* of the future development of India. But mere spirit is not enough in this world, though it is no doubt essential. It is true that when the spirit wakes up, it finds suitable forms for itself. But the wastage of experiment and repeated rejection which precedes the final discovery of the suitable form, is often very great and entails great loss of power and time. National workers therefore must also give earnest attention to the *forms* which the rising spirit of the nation should be given. Unsuitable forms often strangle the spirit and obstruct its manifestation. India therefore must discover most suitable forms for the renascent Indian spirit.

In our opinion, Swami Vivekananda has already given us the forms which the future nation should take. This great prophet of Indian nationalism has not only bequeathed to the nation knowledge and strength but also the forms in and through which they are to work out the destiny of India. Swamiji once remarked that renunciation and service are the two national ideals of India, and India being intensified in those channels, the rest will take care of itself. Renunciation stands for the goal of the nation, the pure spiritual illumination, and service for the methods, especially Karma Yoga, by which the goal is to be attained. All activity is to be conceived as service of the Divine in man. If that is so, the forms of the ideal and the method become at once determined. The one is to be monasticism and the other is to be worship in work, or as we say, *Math* and *Mission*. We must explain the

terms before our meaning can become clear. *Math* stands predominantly for spiritual forms proper, outside the pale of society, devoting itself essentially to spiritual and intellectual culture. But it does not stand aloof from the society, unconcerned with its needs and aspirations. Remaining outside, it yet mixes in the affairs of society in the spirit of pure service, attending to its physical, mental and spiritual needs and teaching it to guide its daily life and individual and collective activities in fealty to and inspired by the ultimate spiritual ideal. When the Math thus concerns itself with the life of society, it becomes the *Mission*, and then it co-operates with the members of society to realise society's ideals and fulfil its wants. Of course in the Mission the members of the Math take a leading and guiding, but not dominating, part, for they often happen to embody the ideal in a greater degree and do social services in a truer spirit. It will be admitted that so far as the representation and realisation of the ultimate national ideal goes, monasticism is its highest and clearest expression. We therefore think that the Indian nation, in the final realisation of its goal, cannot do better than advocate the monastic form. What is to be the form of the collective activities of those who do not bid for the highest goal, who are yet on the way and in the world? This, we think, can be nothing better than the Mission. Suppose every group of villages were to have a Math where would live those who are devoted to the practice of the highest ideal; and along with the Math there were to be an Association, of which all men and women of the villages and the Math were members, devoting itself to the promotion of every good of the villages, educational, sanitary, medical, industrial, economical, social, cultural and spiritual, fulfilling those functions through an elected executive. This Association would be a Mission centre. The executive body being under the guidance of the Math and inspired by it, will fulfil its function from a true spiritual motive. It may for convenience's sake have sub-committees looking after the different functions of the community. But through this Association, there will be a fruitful co-ordination of the entire social life; and *what is more important, every work will be done in the spirit of worshipful service which the connection with and the guidance by the Math will create and maintain.* This will be, we think, the future organisation of our rural and urban communities,—all social service, in order to be truly performed, affiliated to the pure spiritual principle. Thus there can be any amount of rajasic activity for achieving material

good,—its direct and intimate relationship with the spiritual ideal will carefully restrain its forward step from straying away from the true path. If the whole country were to be dotted over with such Maths and Missions, will not India have regained both its spirit and form?

The object of the Ramakrishna Order is nothing short of this achievement. It wants to honeycomb India with its monastic and service centres. The ideal of its centres of service is the enrolment of every man and woman, of every caste, creed and race, Hindu, Muhammadan and Christian, as its member, and the performance of *all* services, social, economical, educational, industrial, sanitary, medical, intellectual, cultural and spiritual, through the agency of the centres, so that the whole community consisting of the different credal, racial or caste groups may be organised into real unity, stimulated and sustained by India's spiritual ideal. We do believe that national striving cannot do better than help the establishment of such centres. Our use of the words *Math* and *Mission* must not be understood to mean that we want all such centres to be under the guidance of *our* own Order. What we intend is that the Math and Mission centres, as conceived by Swami Vivekananda, offer most suitable models for national organisation. Let there be many such organisations all over India, under any guidance ; only let them be faithful to the Ideal in profession and practice, and let the work be done in the spirit indicated above ; that is enough. In many places organisational work is being undertaken ; and we are happy to note that similar Ashramas and service associations are being started by other agencies than ourselves. This is a movement in the right direction. Let us hope greater advance will be made and much more rapidly.*

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

(Continued from the January issue)

Then for many days, in the pressure of school duties, I could not visit the Holy Mother. When at last I went, she received me with great affection. Bhudev, Mother's nephew, was reading from the *Mahabharata* but he was very young

* *Erratum* : *Prabuddha Bharata*, February, Page 75, Footnote, read 1927 for 1917.—Ed.

and was halting in his reading. It was nearing dusk ; so Mother asked him to transfer the book to me that I could finish the chapter quickly, after which Mother could go to other duties. I had never read before Mother,—shyly I went through the reading. Mother saluted the book, and we all repaired to the shrine to attend the evening service. Mother sat down to her *japa*.

After *japa*, she bowed before the Master and distributed *prasada* to all. Then talk began and Mother said : “One must always work. Work keeps both body and mind sound. While I lived at Jayrambati, I worked day and night. Never would I go to neighbours’ ; for if I went, they would say, ‘Alas, Shyama’s daughter has been married to a mad man.’ I would not visit anywhere lest I had to listen to these things. Once at Jayrambati I fell seriously ill, and I could not be cured. At last I went to the temple of Mother Simhavâhini and remained prostrating and praying at the door. This cured me. . . .”

There was a small field in front of the Udbodhan office, where resided some poor families hailing from different provinces of India. They all lived by labour. Among the men was one who lived with a concubine. She had fallen ill. Mother referred to this and observed : “How he is nursing her ! I have never seen the like of it. This indeed is serving ! This indeed is love !”

One of the women from the field came to Mother with her ailing child to beg Mother’s blessings. Mother blessed the child, saying, “He will get well,” and gave some grapes and pomegranates for the child, after they had been offered to the Master. The woman went back happy after repeatedly saluting the Mother.

The 28th *Magha*, 1318. As I sat after saluting the Mother, she said sorrowfully : “Girish Babu* passed away four days ago. They came to-day to take me to his place. But how could I have the heart to go there now that he is no more ? How deep was his faith and devotion ! Have you heard that story of Girish Ghosh ?—He asked the Master that he (Master) should be born as his son, to which the Master replied, ‘I do not care a straw for being born as your son.’ But shortly after the Master’s passing, a son was born to Girish, and the child did not

* Girish Chandra Ghosh, one of the prominent householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, was a great playwright and actor of Bengal. Sri Ramakrishna highly praised his faith and devotion.

speak for four years, expressing himself only by gestures. Girish and his family served him as the Master himself. They arranged for everything separate for him,—glasses, dishes, clothes, etc. which none else were allowed to use. Girish used to say that the Master himself had been born as his son. Who can tell?—the prayers of a devotee are indeed powerful. One day when he came to my place with the child, the child became restless to see me, pulled at every one and pointed upwards to where I lived. At first he was not understood, but afterwards he was brought upstairs to me. Such a small child, but he made a deep bow at my feet, and going downstairs began to pull at Girish to bring him to me. Girish began to cry aloud, saying, 'Oh, how can I go to see Mother,—I am a great sinner.' But the child would not give in. Then Girish came trembling upstairs, with tears flowing from his eyes and the child in his arms. He prostrated before me and said, 'Mother, this child has made it possible for me to see your blessed feet.' The child died when four years old.

"Before this incident, Girish and his wife had one day got upon the roof of their house. I was also at that time walking on the terraced roof of Balaram Babu's house. But I did not notice that I was visible to them. Afterwards I learnt from his wife that she had told Girish about my presence there, on learning which he had turned away from my direction and replied, 'No, no, mine are sinful eyes,—I will not look at Mother in this secret way,' and had gone below."

1st *Ashada*, 1319. In the afternoon when I went to Mother, I found her sitting with a number of lady devotees, some of whom were known to me, and talking smilingly with them. Seeing me she said, "You are come! come, mother, sit down." I had a copy of *Nivedita* brought from the office downstairs, with the intention of reading out a few passages from it to Mother. Seeing the book, Mother asked, "What is this book?" "*Nivedita*," I replied. "Read out a little," said Mother, "let me hear. One copy of it has been presented to me also, but I have not yet had it read out to me." Mother and all present listened intently as I read and all eyes glistened and tears flowed from Mother's eyes when I read the passage which described Sister Nivedita's devotion. Mother said: "How wonderful was the devotion of Nivedita! In her eagerness she would not know what she would do for me. When she came at nights to see me, she would screen the lamp of my room that its light might not hurt my eyes. She would

bow at my feet and take the dust from them* with a handkerchief with great care and devotion,—it seemed as if she was afraid even to touch my feet.” So saying, Mother became silent, absorbed in the thought of Nivedita. One of the ladies said: “It is a great misfortune to India that she passed away so young.” “She was indeed of India herself,” remarked another. “She herself would say so. On Saraswati Puja days, she would put on the *Homa* mark on her forehead and walk barefooted.”† Even after the reading was over, Mother grieved for her for sometime and said at last: “Do you know, mother, one who is a good soul, is mourned by the Great Soul (the inner self) himself.”

Then came the afternoon service in the shrine, and Mother distributed *prasada* to all.

One of the ladies said: “Mother, I have five daughters. None of them has been married yet. This has made me anxious.” Mother replied: “Why are you anxious if they have not been married? Send them to the Nivedita School. They will be educated and live happily.” At this another lady said to the anxious mother: “If you have faith in Mother, do what she has said,—it will surely be to their good. Since Mother has said so, why should you fear?” But the lady did not seem to appreciate the advice.

Some one said: “Now-a-days, bridegrooms are hard to get. Many young men now refuse to marry.” “The boys are growing in wisdom,” returned Mother, “they are coming to feel that the world is transient. The less they are attached to the world, the better.”

(To be continued)

WOMAN IN MODERN INDIA

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

The saying that Indian regeneration will come through Indian women is growing hackneyed. The words are found on the lips of many who have not troubled to think clearly what they mean. The fact is, by the education of women we mean to-day her civilisation. The problem of the age, for India, as we have constantly insisted, is to supersede the family, as a motive, and even as a form of consciousness, by the civitas,

* This is the traditional Hindu way of showing profound respect.

† As orthodox Hindus do.

the civic and national unity. This cannot be done by men, as men, alone. It is still more necessary that it should be done by women. In all questions of the moral and personal life, woman is a far greater factor than man. In her care lies the synthesis of life. As she determines the character of the home, out of which man goes forth to his day's labour, so also it is her conception of what life as a whole should be that dominates and creates the world. Man is only a clever child ; in woman's care and keeping is the well of life. It follows that while man must always take the lead in special departments of activity it is at the same time of the highest importance that the general scheme of life should be understood by the women of a community, and should not be such as to shock and outrage their sense of right. We all know how important it is to individual happiness that men and women should be in substantial accord, and we can well believe that if a community is to put forth its utmost energy in any given direction, it will be necessary that its men and its women should be combined in the one great effort.

This is our position to-day. We are determined to initiate new developments. For this, it is essential that we make our own material, and of all our material, none is in this sense so important as the women. A great deal of our nationalising energy, therefore, has to be given, during the coming years, to making the women of our families more devoted to the country than they are even to their fathers, husbands and brothers, and qualified to judge still better what will serve the welfare of the nation, than as to that of the family. This is all, the essence of the whole matter. It amounts to the reception of a new idea, for our women have not been accustomed to think much of larger areas than the village at utmost. The impingement of new ideas creates enormous energy. It is likely, therefore, that those who are really touched, will show the fact at once, by an eagerness to be taught reading and writing. It is obvious that if they can once read they will be in a position to feed their own national sense for themselves. But many will be too old, or will not have the faculty, to master the new methods of knowledge. Not on this account are any to be passed by. Reading and writing are not in themselves education. The power to use them well is vastly more important than the things themselves. A woman in whom the great compassion is awakened, a woman who understands the national history, a woman who has made some of the great *tirthas* and has a notion of what her country looks like, is much more truly and deeply educated than one who has merely read much. "Awake ! Awake !" means, first

of all, awake to the great multiform consciousness, let everything that is Indian breathe and work through you. Identify yourself, in thought, day by day, with all sorts of strange beings and strange interests, recognising that they, with you, possess equally the common home. Dedicate some part of every puja, to this thought of the Mother who is Swadesh. Lay a few flowers before Her, pour out a little water in Her name. Think of Her children, your own kindred, who are one in need. Let your hearts go out in infinite pity. "Mother and Motherland," says the proverb, "is better than Swarga!" Ah, the sorrow for those who are ahungered, and cannot feel this joy! "Awake! Awake!" Rise up and get ye knowledge, womanhood of India! womanhood of Bengal! Learn of your own past. Only so can you realise your future. Learn of your country and her needs. Only by this can you train your judgment, your will and power of choice. Only by growing knowledge can the heart be enriched, and thought become clearer. "Awake! Awake!" Be free and work. Let selfishness guide the hand, and love inspire the will. So shall no sacrifice be defeated, and every movement shall avail. No bondage shall hinder those who have risen to this height. No ignorance shall stand. No vastness of the task before them shall dismay. "Bande Mataram." All the problems of to-day have to be attacked on a national scale. The problem of problems is the achievement of nationality itself. But in this matter of the education of women, it will be well if our men can remember exactly what part of the task is its core and essence. Let us talk with our womankind about the affairs of the country. Let us appeal constantly to the growing judgment and enthusiasm. Let us create those qualities in them, if they do not already exist, by believing steadfastly in the Atman who is within all. The doctrine of the divinity of the human soul has no meaning whatever if it is not this, that each one of us, man or woman, high or low, learned or ignorant, is in spirit the Pure, the Free, the All-wise, and that the one help we can render another is to evoke this realisation in its fulness.

Daily the life of our Indian womanhood is shrinking. Day by day, their scope is being lessened. Unless we can capture for them the new world of expression, they will steadily continue to lose more and more of the world they had. If Sita and Savitry are ever to be born of Indian mothers, we must create new types for them, suited to the requirements of the modern age. Gandhari must live again, with new names to think of, but all the ancient faith and courage, steadfastness and sacrifice.

Damayanti must return, and Draupadi, fit wife for Yudhisthira, king of justice. Awake! Awake! greatness of Indian womanhood must be the cry of Indian men.

VEDANTA AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

BY MADELINE R. HARDING

It is said that a rolling stone gathers no moss. This may be true in many directions in material things but the contrary in spiritual; for it is those who are prepared to follow Truth wherever and however expressed who become rich in spiritual experience and understanding, and who at last see in all religions and all creeds a part of the One Great Whole.

This realisation, however, comes only to those whose minds are set on assimilating whatsoever is good, whatsoever is Truth, wherever found, and not to those who are out for so-called investigation.

Such a realisation came to Sri Ramakrishna, when intent on discovering the truths contained in Christianity he made himself receptive to Christian thought and ideals and was rewarded with a vision of Jesus, a vision so vivid that he exclaimed, "This is the Christ Who poured out His heart's blood for the redemption of mankind and suffered a sea of agony for their sake. It is none else than that Master-Yogin in eternal union with Godhead—Jesus the embodiment of Love."

In the same way he identified himself with other religions and in the words of Swami Vivekananda, "To his astonishment found that, when faithfully carried out, these devotional methods led him to the same goal he had already attained. He came to know that the goal of every religion is the same, the difference being largely in method."

The quest of the Eternal seems ever to need some form of expression, some particular path to tread to the goal of realisation, to the Absolute Being, the Alpha and Omega, but as the Bhagavad Gita so beautifully expresses it—

"However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine."

Yet, no doubt, all the sects and schools of thought are based on one great fundamental Truth whether we speak of the Supreme Being, the All-pervading Spirit, the Absolute, Eolin, Ormazd, Ahura Mazda, the Architect of the Universe. And

it is well to realise our indebtedness to that one all-embracing fundamental Truth.

Sir Oliver Lodge said recently in relation to Science—

“It is necessary to try to find an explanation, a theory, to promote an understanding of the facts, because disjointed facts, like beads that are not threaded upon a string, are very difficult to absorb and deal with. They cannot be called Science. Science means ordered knowledge. It is our business to thread the beads on a string. If we thread them on a feeble string it may break, but a weak string is better than none at all; it gives some kind of order.”

And just so it would seem there must needs be some great and all-embracing understanding of God which is broad enough to encircle all smaller conceptions made up of the varied thoughts and expressions of nations and peoples; some great and unifying conception of the Absolute to which they all converge, some in lesser and some in greater degree.

We speak of dogma, of creed, of orthodoxy, of tenets, of faith and of our own particular belief, but how seldom is human thought broad enough to recognise in each a part of the whole, a part of revelation which has come to an individual or a body of men which appeals to them, and to which they conform their religious life. The trouble is that each thinks that the whole of Truth has been specially revealed to him or his sect, in fact all that is necessary, as well as essential, for the so-called salvation of mankind. In this direction the ordinary Western mind is very limited, seldom admitting the boundlessness, the infiniteness of Truth, as varied as the minds of men who receive it.

When one comes in contact with different phases of religious thought one sometimes wonders where this or that conception had its birthplace. Often we know the immediate parents, so to speak, but how seldom we go back and endeavour to trace the long line of descent. All are not fortunate enough to have come in contact with Indian literature, but when one begins such a study one recognises first one little gem and then another which have been, as it were, detached from the string and which we have known as such and such a denomination or sect, and on this one gem we find some church has been found. And just as the Bhagavad Gita declares with relation to the different paths of approach to the Infinite—“All this is threaded on Me, as rows of pearls on a string,” so can the Vedanta be called the String to which the many and varied expressions of Truth belong.

This is clearly seen in the so-called orthodox religions of the West, and it is particularly interesting to trace in some of the newer movements of the West their close identification with the Vedanta.

In this little article we will trace a few of the similarities in the teachings of the Vedanta and a comparatively modern expression of some of its truths known as Christian Science. Other movements may be dealt with in future articles.

During comparatively recent years certain minds have outgrown the limitations of Western orthodoxy and thousands have sought to know God by other and newer means. They have wanted proof that God is and that He has a part in the lives of men and women to-day. They crave for a demonstrable understanding, not merely faith in events and happenings of centuries past. To many, Christian Science has given this satisfaction.

Without going into all the details around which controversy has waged incessantly as to whence came the conception, suffice it to say that in the year 1875 a book was published entitled "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy", and its teachings were called "Christian Science".

The term Christian Science which Mrs. Eddy used, does not appear to have been original, but the supporters of this faith ever close their eyes to facts, and it is sufficient for them that the author says, "In the year 1866 I discovered the Christ Science or Divine Laws of Life, Truth and Love, and I named my discovery 'Christian Science' ". We find in "The Quimby Manuscripts" however,—a book which was published two or three years ago when it became almost impossible to longer suppress facts, and with a view to quelling the controversy as to Mrs. Eddy's claim to be the discoverer—that Dr. Quimby applied the term Christ Science, Divine Science, Science of Health to his method of healing and that as far back as 1863 he used the actual term *Christian Science*.

We need not here go into all the wonderful teaching of Dr. Quimby as to Reality and Unreality on which this science was based, nor quote letters still extant, written by Mrs. Eddy acknowledging her indebtedness to Dr. Quimby. Our desire now is to show the relation of Christian Science to the Vedanta. To do this fully a book might be written, therefore we propose to take only a few of the outstanding features of similarity.

The term "Key to the Scriptures" is not altogether correct; the key does not fit in every instance. It unlocks the

door to a great deal which appears difficult in the Christian Bible, but also a great deal has to be taken for granted, or because Mrs. Eddy says so, and we have to spiritualise much which is not intended to be other than material. At times it has seemed that there must be deeper truths of a more mystical nature than those contained in our Scriptures and to which the 'Key' would be a better fit.

And so in the course of time we were able to know a little of the teachings of the Vedanta and we found the 'Key to the Scriptures' a much better fit to a great deal of the teaching in these ancient sacred writings than to the Bible; that it is largely a key to many of the great truths which have been more or less hidden from the West. In many ways the ancient wisdom of the East is finding its way to the West in ever widening streams.

Things were very dark in the history of suffering India when "Science and Health" was being compiled, and it would appear that except just to those few who had previously come across some of the wonder and beauty of her literature, the channel was effectively closed. Bitter feelings, based on one-sided reports were still at their height—reports which a few noble souls at intervals have endeavoured to rectify, a notable instance being the comparatively recent book, "The Other Side of the Medal". The year 1857 might well have appeared as the death knell of India's religious thought so far as influencing the West was concerned. But many gems had already found their way here, rare specimens had already taken root in a few eager souls, and truth being eternal will ever send up shoots of fresh life.

And so to the Science of Health, or Christian Science taught and practised by Dr. Quimby as far back as the fifties which was used by him for bodily healing only, Mrs. Eddy added a religious system so similar in its basic thoughts to Vedantic truths that we wonder why its source was never divulged or credit given to that great Eastern people to whom the whole world, more or less, owes its religion. But no, again and again, when one and another recognises the similarity and makes it public, it is the duty of one or other of the Committee on Publication to contradict it in such terms as the following, among many other contradictions which have appeared quite recently:—

"In a recent issue of your paper a minister, speaking on Hinduism, is credited with the statement: 'The philosophy of India is reappearing in America in new forms. It is seen in

Christian Science, in which some of the fundamentals have been borrowed from Indian philosophy.' If the minister is correctly quoted, his statement indicates that he is ignorant of the tenets, the teaching, and the practice of Christian Science. Christian Science is a religion based upon the Bible, particularly upon the teachings of Christ Jesus; and it neither resembles nor is indebted to any mystic philosophy or religion in India or elsewhere. This fact can be verified by any honest investigator."

This gentleman has evidently never investigated Indian philosophy or religion as the minister who made the statement appears to have done. Moreover it is against what is permitted by the Christian Science Church to study anything which is not pure Christian Science ; it is part of 'error' to be avoided.

From the writings of Swami Abhedananda we learn that in the early editions of "Science and Health" Mrs. Eddy quoted from the Vedanta philosophy and he says that in the 24th Edition of "Science and Health" there was a chapter, now entirely suppressed, which began with four quotations from Vedanta philosophy. That also in that same chapter Mrs. Eddy quoted from a translation of the Bhagavad Gita by Charles Wilkins, published in London in 1785 and in New York in 1867. These quotations are now omitted. There are merely one or two veiled references to Indian thought in "Science and Health" as when the author says, "The Indians caught some glimpses of the underlying reality when they called a certain beautiful lake 'The smile of the great Spirit.' " And in another place, "Those natural Christian Scientists, the ancient worthies", etc.

Before proceeding to deal with just a very few of the extraordinary number of similarities between Vedanta and Christian Science teaching, it may be of interest to make some mention of the extent of the Christian Science organisation ; it has spread practically throughout the world.

The Christian Science Mother Church is in Boston, Massachusetts, and America is the chief stronghold of Christian Science. At the present time "The Mother Church has 2,277 branches. There are also twenty-nine colleges and university organisations". Sunday schools are attached to the churches. The registered practitioners, who can be called upon for the healing of disease and sickness—in fact disharmony of any kind—run into many thousands. The publishing and literature departments are extensive. The chief periodicals are the monthly Journal, the weekly Sentinel and the daily Monitor. Their circulations are enormous. The books and writings on

Christian Science are numerous, many of them published in various languages. The financial position of the organisation is in a flourishing condition. The figures of its various departments we cannot give here ; suffice it to say that last year the receipts of the Mother Church General Fund alone were \$1,378,973,83. This apart from Trust Funds and many other sources of income, as well as the wealth of all its other departments. There is a Board of Lectureship whose members, and they only, are authorised to give lectures. "During the last twelvemonth . . . members of the Board of Lectureship of this church delivered 3,573 lectures". These were given in almost every country of the world. No matter what the capacity of the hall in which a lecture is to be given, it is invariably crowded. "This year the Mother Church enrolled the largest number of new members in its history". But the extent and activities of this organisation are too vast to go into here in any adequate way, moreover figures are not as a rule interesting except to see beneath them some cause for the abundance they represent.

When considering all this something seems to say : What a monument this vast organisation might have been to the teachings of the Vedanta. And then again it sometimes comes to one : Perhaps one day the truth of the similarity of the teachings will be realised and acknowledged by all and the hands of East and West will be clasped in brotherhood in a way never dreamed of before, for after all it is the recognition of Spiritual oneness, not political, which so to speak brings about heaven on earth

Let us now look at a few of the chief similarities between the teachings of the Vedanta and Christian Science, remembering that where it is possible to give here perhaps only one instance on a particular point, there are hundreds which might be selected.

In answer to the question, "*What is God*", "*Science and Health*"—the Christian Science text book—says, "Incorporeal, Divine, Supreme, Infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love . . . these synonyms refer to one *absolute* God . . . the *wholeness* of Deity. The great I AM, the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving and eternal, all-substance. Mind or Intelligence, the Source and Giver of life. Nothing has life apart from God."

And what is the teaching of the Vedanta on this point gathered so far as one has been able from the study of expositions?

In one treatise the Supreme is spoken of as the "Absolute Spirit, the Infinite Being the eternal absolute oneness of the Supreme Spirit one stupendous indivisible whole the Impersonal Absolute", as the Bhagavad Gita says—"Whose SELF is the SELF of all beings". Indeed 'The Lord's Song' is so full of this teaching of the real SELF of man as opposed to the material that it is useless to attempt to select extracts from it. It is on this point—the denial of the material and the realisation of the spiritual—that the Christian Science claim of destruction of sin and sickness is based.

Also in another Vedanta exposition we read, "He is the Soul of my soul as well as the Soul of the universe". Again, "Can there be two infinities? There can be only one. This one is the one infinite Atman, everything else is its manifestation".

What is man? Christian Science says: "Spiritual and perfect eternal, not a single quality underived from Deity, possesses no life, intelligence nor creative power of his own, but reflects spiritually all that belongs to his Maker. Man is incapable of sin, sickness and death. The Real Man cannot depart from holiness God and the Real Man are inseparable" etc.

The Vedanta as we have already seen teaches the perfection of man (the Real Man)—that he is pure and perfect.

What are the teachings of Christian Science as to the *phenomenal world and mortal man*? 'Science and Health' answers, "Illusion, the opposite of Truth, the opposite of Spirit, the opposite of God; that of which immortal man takes no cognizance". Again, from other writings: "The material world is a world of illusion where men dimly perceive their true selfhood as spiritual light dawns upon them and dispels the veil of illusion". It teaches, "The unreality of what is revealed by the material senses, that God is the only Absolute however real this world and its attendant evils may seem in human experience".

The Vedanta teaches that "The whole of nature is like a screen which is hiding the reality beyond. Every good thought that you think or act upon is simply tearing the veil, as it were, and the Purity, the Infinity, the God behind, manifests itself".

Then if we take the point of *Birth and Death*. Christian Science speaks of them as illusion "any material evidence of death is false, for it contradicts the spiritual facts of being".

The Vedanta teaches, "Man is neither born nor dies, nor goes to heaven . . . births and deaths are changes in Nature which we mistake for changes in us".

Regarding *mortal man* Christian Science says, "It is really a self-contradictory phrase for man is not mortal, neither indeed can be". In the words of the Christian Science scientific statement of being: "There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all. Spirit is immortal Truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal; matter is the unreal and temporal. Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material; he is spiritual".

The Vedanta says: "The more this present self rolls away, the more the Real Self becomes manifest in its full glory". The distinction made between the spiritual and the material, the Real and the unreal in relation to man and the phenomenal world is perhaps the most emphatic of all the similarities between Christian Science and the Vedanta.

And then that distinctly Indian thought which could never have been gathered in the West from the teachings of our Scriptures—the aspect of God as Mother. Christian Science says: "Mother—God; divine and eternal Principle; Life, Truth and Love".

Indian teachings as to the worship of God as Mother we all know too well to need to give any isolated instances.

It is impossible here to deal with the many points of similarity—they extend over almost the entire teachings. Just as Mrs. Eddy retired from the world for some two or three years in order to perfect the Christian Science text book, so it would take almost as long to attempt to compare the similarities of thought between the Vedanta and Christian Science. Whether we look at some of the less prominent expressions such as "The pairs of opposites", we find it in the Christian Science text book under "Contrasting pairs of terms". In each set of teachings we find sin referred to as ignorance, and so on almost *ad infinitum*.

This article is not written with the idea of depreciating the value of Christian Science nor of taking from Mrs. Eddy the credit of putting these deep truths in such a way that men and women can avail themselves of them for practical use in daily life. We know the power which the understanding of this teaching has in the healing of sin and sickness, and the help which it can give in times of stress and trial. With

wonderful material at hand Mrs. Eddy has done a great service. She admits that she simply *re-discovered* the teachings of Jesus the Christ, and we know that His life and teaching can be explained only as we understand something of older Indian teaching, for as St. Augustine said, "What is now called the Christian religion has existed among ancients and was not absent from the beginning of the human race, until Christ came in the flesh, from which time the true religion, which existed already, began to be called Christianity".

As *re-discoverer* from the standpoint of practical application, we can be thankful to her but we need not make her almost an object of worship as so many Christian Scientists do or force ourselves into the belief that the 'little book' mentioned in the Christian Bible, in Revelation, is necessarily 'Science and Health'. We need not refer to her with adoration, sometimes it would seem in a way which surpasses that rendered to the Master, Jesus the Christ. The constant reference to the name 'Eddy' at all the services becomes truly wearying to many of us. Neither need we try to spiritualise the most ordinary events in her life as many of her followers do, and as is done in her authentic biography. Her three marriages appear to be the most ordinary everyday affairs needing no spiritualising, and her earlier life was that of an ordinary person. But she had time and ability for investigating certain principles of healing as practised by Dr. Quimby, through whom Mrs. Eddy was herself healed as her own letters testify.

The basis of Christian Science understanding is the Allness of God and the nothingness of matter ; that God is All-good knowing no evil, and that through this realisation the action of God takes place destroying all that is unlike God, good, whether it be sin, sickness, limitation, lack, or disharmony of any nature whatsoever.

Here perhaps is the difference in the *realisation* of Christian Science and the *realisation* of the followers of the Vedanta. The former teaches that the realisation of God, good, should bring about perfect harmony in all one's surroundings. The latter that the realisation of God should mean disregard of the material. However, whichever path we choose, it seems indisputable that a much clearer understanding of the teachings of Christian Science can be gained by a study of the Vedanta philosophy, particularly through the study of the Bhagavad Gita. Seeing many failures in Christian Science healing one often felt during those years that there was a missing link somewhere, that the explanation of *lack of understanding* on

the part of the practitioners did not cover the whole ground, that there was something yet to be discovered. After searching several years, the nearest approach to discovering the missing link so far, seems to be in the realisation of the Atman.

A LETTER OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH

[I wrote to M. Romain Rolland early last year asking his opinion about the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda in whom, I knew, he was deeply interested. In answer, I received a most cordial reply which I publish below. I have since received a few more letters from him, all of which, I am sure, will interest the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata*. I hope to publish them by and by.—*Swami Ashokananda*.]

26th June, 1927.

DEAR SIR,

A year ago some pages of Dhan Gopal Mukherjee revealed to me the great soul of Sri Ramakrishna, and this revelation has excited me to know more of his life and his thoughts. For several years my sister and myself have read books published by the Prabuddha Bharata Office or from the Ramakrishna Mission, that our Indian friends were kind enough to send us. The last month we had a visit from Miss M. and during the days we passed together we often spoke of the Swami Vivekananda.

I look upon the Swami Vivekananda as a dynamo of spiritual force and Sri Ramakrishna as a river of Love. Both of them reveal God and life eternal. And the most genial is Vivekananda. But Ramakrishna is above him in genius.

I wish to dedicate to them a book which would make them known to the great masses of the West. The task is long and very difficult. There is in their rich thoughts multitudes of different elements of which the classification does not appear to me to have been made in that spirit of order which claims the intelligence (or even the heart) of the West. One part of these elements has a character very specifically Indian. Another part is universal, and it is that part which I wish to emphasise.

Now we are in Europe and in the whole world at an hour of social tempest coming out from a tempest of action, and on the eve of a new cyclone of action, still more formidable than

the preceding one, in which millions of men are seeking for a direction. One must try and give it to them as clearly, as simply and as shortly as possible and without waiting, for the cyclone will never wait.

For which cause it is necessary to allow the entrance of the Sun of Truth, whose rays enlighten the road where these people will have marched. I am convinced that the Swami Vivekananda would have aided them powerfully if he had lived at the hour in which we live to-day. But at the hour of his death and above all at that of Sri Ramakrishna the maelstrom of the world had not yet affected all peoples by its turbulent outbreak ; it was still the heavy night in which the storm was gathering itself in silence. At present we must think of all those who will perish (I am speaking of the death of the soul) if one does not render them assistance.

My sister and myself have a very keen desire to enter into relations with Sister C. of whom we have heard people speak with tenderness and veneration. Few souls, I think, have had the privilege of being so close to that of Vivekananda as hers. We should be happy if we could correspond with her by letters with the hope that one day we shall have the pleasure of meeting her.

We have been told also that at the Advaita Ashrama in the Himalayas there was a learned man, B.,...an ardent disciple of Vivekananda. We should like to know him and of his interpretation of the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda on science.

As I can understand them (and as my thought tells me), science is one of the roads towards God and it is the road by which the West will march with the greatest surety towards Him, if it could be better guided. It would be useful to know if Vivekananda had the opportunity of expressing himself about this and in what work.

I address to you, dear Swami Ashokananda, to you and to your brothers my brotherly salutation. I feel that I am united with you in the contact of that divine unity of which Sri Ramakrishna has been the Song of Songs become man.

To you all, affectionately,
ROMAIN ROLLAND

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—I

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

(iii) VOCATIONAL

Education must be both individual and communal in its outlook. Every individual must be allowed to grow as much as he possibly can and contribute his maximum towards the weal of the community. At the same time it would undoubtedly be a serious mistake if special care is not taken to look at the community as an organic whole and provide for a proportionate growth of its various parts. Hundreds of vocations are required for a community in these days, and all of them do not require the same type of education, nor do they require the same measure of intellectual attainments. A system of education, which can help turning out men for the various functions with different types and grades of education suited to each, is what a community requires for its existence.

Distribution of vocations in this country was made in the past according to caste, and education was likewise adjusted. But now-a-days we talk of labour class, middle class and aristocracy as if these are the three classes in the country, and we really find that a new assortment of vocations as well as corresponding education is every day coming into vogue between these three divisions of our people. These three divisions are becoming more and more demarcated ; their basis we should note is money and not caste. We won't err much if we state that the primary and minor schools in villages are meant mainly for the children of the craftsmen and the peasantry and high schools and colleges for the middle class and aristocracy. Nowhere in these schools and colleges is there any provision for specialisation in vocations except medicine, law and engineering which are forbidden grounds for the poorer section of the community. Some of the castes are still retaining their hereditary occupations, but they have no school where their boys may learn to improve their vocation in the light of modern sciences. Some of course are making a bid for high education and trying to enlist themselves in the middle class. Such is the influence of the present-day schools that a boy sent there is invariably lost to his ancestral trade. Education in these institutions is somehow associated with freedom from manual labour. While acquiring literacy, the

child coming from a labour class family becomes more and more unfit for his father's trade.

This state of things has to be materially changed. The elementary and minor schools in villages have to make provisions for compulsory vocational training. Agriculture being the mainstay of the labour class including craftsmen, scientific agriculture, dairy-farming and agricultural industries should be made compulsory subjects for vocational training. Optional courses for various handicrafts (such as weaving, tanning, carpentry, basket-making, toy-making, smithy, pottery, masonry, survey, repair of stoves, watches, cycles, musical instruments and various other articles of use, etc.) should be open to the pupils. While choosing the optional course the pupil may be encouraged to specialise in his father's trade but certainly nothing should be forced upon him against his guardian's will. These vocational courses in village schools must necessarily be of an elementary nature and graded according to the age and capacity of the pupils. *These village schools should be principally industrial schools*, where academic education will be only a subsidiary factor.

High schools which are mainly intended for middle-class boys should also provide for a higher standard of training in improved farming, commerce, banking, insurance, book-keeping, and modern industries such as chemical industries, motor-mechanics, etc. *High schools* should be essentially academic and industrial training should be a subsidiary part of the curriculum, so that the boys may just develop a taste for practical work, but there should be arrangements within these schools so that after finishing the academic course most of the boys may receive a thorough and systematic training in one or more of these vocational courses. Separate industrial schools may also serve the purpose ; *but at the present stage when education in high schools and colleges has acquired a peculiar prestige, industrial courses ought to be taught and patronised by these institutions.* For this will go to dignify vocational training in the eyes of pupils as well as guardians.

(iv) CHARACTER-BUILDING

Education is a misnomer unless it helps one to build one's character. By character we mean here only training of the will, which implies strengthening the will and directing it properly. Will may be said to be a force on the mental plane having both magnitude as well as direction and character-

building signifies increasing the magnitude and adjusting the direction of this mental force. A man of character wills loftily and honestly and has the firmness to execute his will in spite of resistance from within or without.

It is interesting to note that character-building was given a prominent place in the Hindu scheme of education. It was recognised by our ancient educators to be the immediate aim of education; for without character, without a thorough training of the will, they observed correctly, no one can be fit for utilising in life any knowledge that may have been imparted to him. Moreover they found that even to qualify anyone for acquiring knowledge of any kind a preliminary training of the will to a certain extent was a necessity. The mind as an important instrument of knowledge and as the mainspring of all actions drew the devoted attention of our early educationists more than anything else and they have left for us a precious lore about mental training, which we can ill afford to ignore.

Will is strengthened by the practice of concentration and self-control and chastened by a culture of refined and lofty sentiments. This is all that our ancients found essential for character-building, and perhaps no modern educationist can add a whit to this so far as principle is concerned.

No less astounding was their discovery with regard to the method of imparting this training. The very conception of the Brahmacharya Ashrama reveals how our ancient educationists were conscious of the value and importance of 'self-activity' as an effective educational method and also of the potency of 'environment' for rousing self-activity.

In the light of our ancient teaching, we need attach more importance to character-building than to the stuffing of information in the pupil's brain, which is tending to be the sole concern of educational institutions of our country.

For strengthening the will *systematic practice of concentration and self-control* must be provided for and it should be remembered that examples, and not mere oral instructions, are required of the teachers. This practice will also be of immense help in sharpening the intellect and developing different faculties. This must be looked upon as an indispensable factor of any healthy education.

Fickleness and irresoluteness are almost synonymous with restlessness of mind. Will-force is bound to be dissipated when the mind runs after too many things at a time. A mind agitated by too many thought-waves cannot be fixed on any

object with unflinching devotion. Such a mind has to be calmed and mental energy has to be conserved before the mind may flow mightily in any given direction. *For this a systematic practice of concentration is a necessity.*

Self-control is a healthy exercise of the will against baser instinctive impulses, and undoubtedly this goes to develop the will considerably. Discipline of any kind is nothing but a lesson in self-control, and surely *Brahmacharya*, (abstinence) on account of its physiological as well as psychological effect, *must be considered as the very basis of all kinds of discipline.* The various vows or *Vratas* of our girls have their educational value in so far as they develop the will through self-control and they should find a place in any modern scheme for our girl-education, of course, with necessary modifications by way of eliminating crudities. Boys and youngmen also should be made to practise occasional fasting and silence. Moreover struggles against instinctive inertia, for maintaining a high standard of active, methodical and well-regulated life, as mentioned in the topic on practical education, will also contribute a good deal towards developing the will-power.

Now, besides strengthening the will we have to give it a proper direction and for this the heart has to be chastened and inspired with noble sentiments. Verily, *love excavates the channel along which will flows.* Love for flesh, lucre and fame determines the will-path of the ordinary man of the world, while love for God, humanity, country and community directs the will of noble souls. A man is said to be elevated in proportion as his love for the little self is replaced by a higher form of love. Character-building therefore requires that pupils should be trained to feel for others, and their love should be gently led, away from their little self, to higher and higher spheres, family, neighbours, community, country and humanity, which are like so many "altar-stairs that slope through darkness up to God". This will undoubtedly purify their heart and help them to be really noble and heroic in their deeds. Sister Nivedita has put it very nicely to give an idea of the educational value of this love :

"Even an ignorant mother, by teaching her boy to love and to act on his love, can be the finest of educators. It is this that makes so many of our great men of to-day attribute so much to their mothers "

Pupils should be made conscious of their environment and helped to feel that their education is meant not for the good of themselves alone but also for the good of *Jana-desha-dharma*. They must be made to feel that their development is intended

for the benefit of the environment. A healthy education must let them know that "no man liveth to himself alone," and it must stir up in them 'the desire to serve, the longing to better conditions, advance their fellows, and lift the whole'.

(i) Now, *love is awakened by faith and developed by service*. Children should be early taught to respect their parents and superiors and to perform every day as a rule little acts of service by way of helping members of their families or schools as well as neighbours. The schoolmaster should make it a point to take note of these acts and encourage his pupils by awarding prizes for "Service".

(ii) No education can be called national unless it inspires love for the country. Sister Nivedita writes emphatically:

"Let love for country and countrymen, for people and soil, be the mould into which our lives flow hot."

For this the first thing necessary is to instil into the students a faith in their country and their people. A proper presentation of history which may introduce students to the glorious achievements of their forefathers, will certainly arouse their faith and admiration. They must be made conscious of the precious contributions of their motherland to religion and speculative philosophy and also of the propagation of her cultural ideals beyond the borders of India even in the hoary past. They should also know how these contributions are valued by modern thinkers, how Vedanta philosophy as well as Buddhism have become important subjects of study and research even in the academic circles of the West. Then our students should also be made to see for themselves in museums and art-galleries or through pictures and lantern-slides the characteristic beauty of Indian painting, sculpture, and architecture, and in this connection they should be made familiar with the appreciatory remarks of modern connoisseurs. For is there anyone whose heart is not filled with admiring love for our country when he reads passages like the following from the pens of Mr. Harvel and Mr. Percy Brown or even when he simply hears the import of such a passage?

"Their art, used only in the service of truth and religion, has made their hands obedient tools of a heaven-sent inspiration; and their unique power of realising this, with a depth and sincerity unsurpassed in the art of any land, or in any epoch, gives them a right to rank among the greatest of the symbolists in the whole history of art."—*Indian Sculpture and Painting*.

"The oldest painting therefore at Ajanta represents no primitive beginning, but an art of some maturity; not the first efforts of indivi

duals groping in darkness of inexperience, but the finished work of a school of artists trained in a high art, manifesting great and ancient traditions."—*Indian Painting*.

Then the students should also be made to feel the grandeur of their early literature, specially of the two magnificent epics, and in this connection also they should be made to know how the literary merits of these early productions have been appreciated by modern critics. Ours students have also to be made conscious of the contributions of our forefathers to positive sciences as described by Sir Brojendra Nath Seal, Sir P. C. Roy, S. J. Radhakumud Mukerjee, and others. They need also feel proud of the contributions to political, economic and sociological science as contained in the *Shanti-parva* of the *Mahabharata* and in *Kautilya Arthashastra*, which have opened an immense and fruitful field of research before the modern scholars of this country.

All these will undoubtedly awaken faith in the country and love for the people. Every effort should be made to deepen the love thus awakened by training students to serve the people. Enrolling batches of students as volunteers for Seva-work during floods, famines, epidemics, should be made a factor of our education.

In this way systematic efforts have to be made to rouse a burning love for their community and their country. Emancipation of sympathy and intellect is of course a necessity. So while calling up love for their country or community, care must be taken to convince them of the fact that they have no reason to hate other communities or countries. They must be made to feel that under the diversities of faiths, customs, histories, and traditions, the same human heart beats everywhere, and thus they should be led to feel for humanity as a whole. But in this we must always remember that *one who cannot love his community cannot love his nation, and without loving the nation one cannot possibly feel any kinship with humanity*.

More important than any one of these forms of love as a purifier of the heart is the love for God. All the remaining forms are comprehended in real love for God. One who can love God surely feels for all. Systematic efforts for developing love for God and religion should be made. This should be made the central gem as it were of the characteristic Hindu heart. Elucidation of our sacred texts, exposition of the lives and sayings of saints and seers, presentation of ideal spiritual lives from *Puranas* and *History*, excursion to holy places and

holy men, spiritual lives of the teachers themselves and the spiritual environment of the school or residence of the students, all these are necessary for awakening this love. Moreover, students have to be disciplined through regular prayers, hymns, worship, etc. in certain forms of ceremonials graded according to their age and capacity.

These different forms, as it were, of love will go to chasten the heart and give a proper direction to the will. In this connection we need add that a *development of the aesthetic sense* is also a mighty agent for chastening the heart. Love for the beautiful is already in man; this has to be drawn out by making the pupils feel and appreciate the beauties of nature. They should be trained to observe and enjoy Nature's bounteous beauty by taking them to lovely spots during excursions. They are to be helped further to take delight in artistic expressions of the beautiful through poetry, music, painting, moulding or sculpture. They should be encouraged and helped to express their own refined ideas and emotions through their own productions of fine arts. Regular lessons in Drawing, Painting, Modelling, Music, etc. go a long way to refine feelings. A flower garden in the school reared by students will be found to be highly useful in calling up the aesthetic sense. It must be noted that the environment of the school or residence of the students should be alive to aesthetic requirements.

If we seriously intend to see that our boys and youths develop character, our education must provide all these for a systematic training of the will.

The glaring omissions in the present system of education described in this article, together with the fact that nearly ninety per cent of our population do not receive any education at all, make the immensity of the task of properly educating our countrymen obvious. In the next article we shall determine how we may fully utilise our strength and resources to put in our maximum contribution towards the solution of this task.

(Concluded)

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

AMERICA

When Swami arrived in the Western metropolis there was a group of loyal friends and students of Vedanta to greet him, and he was taken at once to the home of Dr. M. H. Logan, the president of the San Francisco Vedanta Society, and a few weeks later to the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Peterson, where he was to make his headquarters. At once old and new students of Vedanta began to come from all directions. The news that another Swami, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, had come to take up the work, spread far and wide and very soon Swami's time was filled to overflowing.

Classes were organized and a hall secured in the downtown section where lectures were given on Sunday afternoons. The home of the Petersons soon proved too small for the augmenting attendance at the classes, and the decision was made to find more commodious quarters. A flat was taken in March, 1903, at 40 Steiner Street, with two front rooms opening into each other, giving larger space for the classes and lectures and with ample living rooms for Swami and Mr. and Mrs. Peterson and their son.

Classes were regularly held on Monday and Thursday evenings for members, the study of the Gita on Monday evenings and the Upanishads on Thursday evenings, with morning and evening lectures on Sunday. Music, of course, was a part of every service, and almost from the inception of the work under Swami, the women members of the Society who were gifted with musical talent supplied the instrumental music and singing at the lectures and classes, with the exception of the Sunday evening service, at which a quartette of the young men sang for seven years. All the musical programs for the Master's birthday and other leading events were arranged by the women, adding much to the enjoyment of such occasions through their whole-souled devotion.

In the year 1904, in response to calls Swami found a fertile field for work in the city of Los Angeles, 425 miles from San Francisco, in Southern California, and after organizing classes there, found a difficulty in carrying on the work at that distance, so in the same year Swami sent to India for an assistant Swami

to take charge of the work there. The Math sent Swami Satchidananda, who came to the quarters at 40 Steiner Street and received a hearty welcome. He stayed for a time under Swami and then left to take up the work at Los Angeles, but at the end of the first year, for reasons of health, he was compelled to return to India.

THE FIRST HINDU TEMPLE IN THE WESTERN WORLD

In 1904 the work had grown to such proportions that Swami felt the time had come when the Society should have a suitable building of its own. With Swami, to think was to act, and a committee was at once appointed to look for a suitable site. Led by Swami, the committee traversed every section of the city, finally selecting the site on which the Temple stands at present. A meeting of all the members was called, the choice of the committee was approved, the funds were quickly raised and the site was purchased in the name of the San Francisco Vedanta Society.

Plans were immediately commenced for the building, under the supervision of Swami, and at last took form in what was to be known as the first Hindu Temple in the whole Western world. The call for subscriptions went out and almost without exception the entire membership, with many friends of the movement, responded. Rich and poor, old and young, came with their offerings and before long sufficient funds were subscribed to commence operations. On August 25th, 1905, with appropriate ceremonies, the cornerstone was laid. In a metal box in the cornerstone, Swami placed pictures of the Master and the Holy Mother and other pictures, that on such a blessed foundation the work might grow in power and ever increasing usefulness. Here at last, in San Francisco, the city beside the Golden Gate, a permanent center was established, a channel through which the Truth could flow to quench the thirst of thousands of world-weary souls with its life-giving waters. With regard to the future of the Temple, Swami said, "I shall not live to enjoy, others will come later who will enjoy," and with particular reference to his own participation he boldly proclaimed, "Believe me, believe me, if there is the least tinge of selfishness in building this Temple it will fall, but if it is the Master's work it will stand." The building still stands on the corner of Webster and Filbert streets.

The Temple was dedicated to the cause of humanity on January 7th, 1906, bringing to the special service many of the out-of-town disciples of Swami Vivekananda and Swami

Turiyananda. The first services were held on Sunday, January 15, 1906.

The Temple building was hardly finished when a great idea was born in Swami's mind—the establishment of a direct branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in San Francisco, to be the headquarters for America. He had no ambition for himself ; his high aim was to induce Swami Brahmananda to come and take full charge of the work in America. His faith and reverence for Maharaj were very great and he believed that if he could be persuaded to come, the work in America would receive a tremendous impetus through the impelling force of his great spiritual power. In pursuance of this idea he added a third floor to serve as living quarters for Swami Brahmananda.

When the addition with its roof and towers was completed, Swami decided to hold a service in which to re-dedicate the Temple as a whole. The re-dedication ceremony was duly announced for the evening of April 5th, 1908, and a special program prepared, consisting of appropriate music, songs and chants, and the distribution of *Prasada* in the form of light refreshments. When the hour arrived the auditorium was filled to overflowing and hundreds were unable to gain admission. After the service in the auditorium was ended, the audience was invited to look over the Temple and then go to the roof where Swami performed Aratrika, "ceremony of waving of lights," in one of the towers, amid the wondering interest of the Western audience. Many that evening received an altogether new impression of the Hindu religion in its application to everyday life and as a practical medium for the universal culture of every sincere spiritual impulse.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

BY D. S. SARMA

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"The bee buzzes round a flower," says Sri Ramakrishna, "only *before* it tastes the sweetness of the honey within. But when it is inside the flower it quietly drinks the nectar." I am sure there are many who are every day quietly tasting the sweetness of Ramakrishna's soul. I should therefore crave the indulgence of these silent admirers and disciples while I, a beginner, buzz for a short time round the flower.

The standard biography of the saint which was published last year by his reverent disciples is a very curious document—quite unlike anything to which English readers are accustomed. The book is written in English. But the world that is revealed to us by the book is most interesting. It is a typically Hindu world having for its nucleus a famous temple, a bathing-ghat, and a sacred river, with all the holiness and filth that these usually involve. It is the haunt of beggars, holy and profane, and of pious worshipers and soulless priests. Here come *sādhus* from distant places with matted hair and long-grown nails and in all degrees of nakedness and illumination. Some pretend to have discovered the philosopher's stone and cheat the innocent village folk of a few annas. Some go about stark naked, but can boast of psychic powers gained after years of grisly toil and meditation. Some carry their sense of equality so far as to eat the leavings of beggars' meals along with dogs, while others laugh and roll themselves the whole day in the dust, out of religious intoxication. There are again some *sādhus* whose intoxication is less spiritual, as it proceeds out of *bhang* and wine. And finally there are among them some *sannyasins* true and pure like Tota-puri—the *guru* of Ramakrishna. Thus the background of the picture presented to us in the biography of the saint is the life in a Hindu temple as it has remained unchanged probably for the last two thousand years. In the course of the narrative we no doubt hear of gas lamps, of pilgrimages by rail, of Christian missionaries, and of the Brahmo Samaj. But we easily forget these marks of the nineteenth-century civilization.

Against a somber background of sublimities and horrors, of uncanny disciplines and rare realizations associated with a Hindu temple, stands the simple, childlike figure of Sri Ramakrishna. In those wonderful visionary eyes of his, which are trained to look upon eternity with a steady gaze, we see, as it were, the experience of all the Hindu sages from the time of the Rig-Veda. It was inevitable, of course, that he should be subject to the limitations of his environment. But it is marvelous how, after his illumination, he transcends them all; and, with the quietness and assurance of one who has seen truth, he gives a message which modern India sorely needs. Like many a *sādhu* of his time, he went through various kinds of uncanny discipline attended by supernatural visions and experiences, but he finally condemned the hankering after occult powers. Like many a *Sakti* devotee, he worshiped

Káli to the end, but he incessantly taught that every religion is only a partial representation of the ineffable Absolute. Like many an orthodox Brahman, he began his life with a strict observance of caste rules in the matter of food, choosing to cook his own meals on the banks of the Ganges rather than eat the *prasadam* of the temple ; but he ended by making his disciples cosmopolitan and permitting them to receive food from the houses of all, irrespective of caste.

I

The life of Ramakrishna is a drama in three acts. The first act begins with the building of the Dakshinesvar temples by Rani Rasmani in 1855, and the appointment of Ramakrishna as a priest in one of them. The early years of the saint, before this date, form a sort of prologue. They were spent mostly in his own village of Kamarpukur. During that time his life was that of any poor Brahman boy in an Indian village even today. He learned very little at school, but a good deal from Puranic recitals, folk songs, and village theatricals. But everyone who was acquainted with him knew that he was an extraordinary boy of a peculiarly sensitive religious temperament. He was often subject to trances, the first of the kind occurring as early as his seventh year. When he was sixteen years old he was obliged to go to Calcutta to help his brother in discharging his duties as a *purohit* among some of the respectable families of that city.

Ramakrishna and his brother struggled on for three years as family priests in Calcutta, and after the construction of the Dakshinesvar temples, they became temple priests.

Then began the period of storm and stress in Ramakrishna's life. The duties he was called upon to discharge in the temple brought to a focus the vague yearnings and the half-satisfied longings of the precocious boyhood. From this time onward he spent twelve years in search of God, with an astonishing tenacity of purpose. The experiences of these years are most harrowing to read. We are told, for instance, that for half this period he did not close his eyelids in sleep. Unconscious of hunger and thirst and unaffected by the incidents that happened around him, the young aspirant spent his days more or less like a lunatic. He would meditate for hours at midnight under an *amalaka* tree in the Panchavati garden, without his clothes, and even without his sacred thread. He would at times weep profusely like a child and often rub his face against the ground in misery. According to an oft-quoted

passage, when the peal of the evening bells in the temple announced the close of day he would become sadder still, and cry, "Another day is gone in vain, Mother, and I have not seen thee. Another day of this short life has passed, and I have not known the truth." Sometimes doubts would harass his soul and he would exclaim, "Art thou true, Mother? Or is it all a fiction of the mind? Is religion a phantasy, a mere castle in the air?" "Oh! What days of madness I passed through," said the saint in his later years. "You cannot imagine the pangs I felt owing to the separation from Mother." He could not conduct the worship in the temple in the prescribed manner. During the evening service, when he had to wave lights before the goddess, he would go on waving them, forgetting when to stop. When making the offerings he would remain gazing at the image as if it were going to eat the food. After some months of this intense state of feeling came the first flash of illumination, of which he has left us a vivid record in a passage which is of great interest to students of mysticism. He says:

I was then suffering from an excruciating pain for not being blessed with a vision of the Mother. I felt as if somebody was squeezing my heart like a wet towel. I was overpowered by a great restlessness, afraid that it might not be my lot to realise her in this life. I could not bear the separation any longer and thought that I had no more need to live. Suddenly my eyes fell on the sword that was in the Mother's temple. Determined to put an end to my life, I jumped like a mad man and seized it—when, all on a sudden, the buildings with their various parts, the temple and all, vanished from my sight, leaving no trace whatsoever; and in their stead I found a limitless, infinite, effulgent ocean of consciousness or spirit, and, as far as the eye could reach, its shining billows were madly rushing toward me from all sides with a terrific noise to swallow me up. In the twinkling of an eye they were on me and engulfed me completely. I was panting for breath. I was caught in the rolling waves and fell down senseless. What happened outside after that, I did not know, nor how that day or the next passed. But within me there was a steady flow of undiluted bliss altogether new, and I felt the direct presence of the divine Mother.

In mystic literature this experience is called the awakening. The emergence of mystic consciousness, sharply marked off from the long dim struggles that precede it, is usually attended by violent bodily changes. After the shock of the first vision, Ramakrishna was unable to exert any control over his body. St. Paul, after a similar experience, was, we know, struck blind. Suso, a German mystic of the fourteenth century, suffered at the time of his awakening so greatly in body

that it seemed to him that none even in dying could suffer so much in so short a time. Richard Rolle of Hampole has recorded that his heart burned with a sensible fire, "truly not imaginingly." Ramakrishna, too, tells us that in subsequent years of storm and stress he felt a burning sensation all over his body, as if his skin had been painted with a caustic lotion. He was also attacked with a ravenous appetite, and no amount of food could satisfy him for some days.

With the first vision of the divine reality begins what is called "the Game of Love" in mystical literature. God plays "hide and seek," as it were, with the new-born soul. Or, in more scientific language, the mystic consciousness comes and goes, leaving the subject miserable and panting in the dark intervals. He begins to interpret his flaming experience in theological terms. He uses the language of the religion he has been brought up in or is acquainted with. St. Paul calls it the Christ. Chaitanya called it Krishna. The saints of southern India call it Siva. Christ calls it the Father. Ramakrishna calls it Kali, the Mother. In all these cases the reality, which is behind the shows of life, is apprehended by the mystic as a person. Consequently the reaction of the soul upon the uprush of the new truth takes the form of passionate love. An intensely human relationship is established between the soul and God—whether it be that of the son to the parent, or that of the servant to the master, or that of the lover to the beloved. These are the three well-known types of mystic devotion. But the reality may be apprehended in other ways also. It may be apprehended as a place instead of a person. The Sufi mystics of Persia describe it as a distant goal, the way to which lies through seven valleys. Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, following popular theology, also represents it as a place. So does Bunyan in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. In all these cases the soul is regarded, not as a child, nor as a servant, nor as a lover, but as a pilgrim. A third way of representing the reality is to describe it as a state or a condition of the soul. Philosophical mystics of the type of Sankara who have the strength to contemplate on *avyakta* or Godhead always represent truth as an ineffable state to which we are to be awakened from the nightmare of life. In this case the soul is regarded as a dreamer or a sleeper. From the sleep of *ajñāna* one has to be awakened into *jñāna*.

After the mystic's experience is thus crystallized into a definite theological or poetic concept, he begins to adjust his

life and character to the new light. He imposes upon himself terrible disciplines to make himself pure and sinless. He cuts new channels in his mind and violently closes up the old. Anything which is likely to draw away his energies from the new center is relentlessly removed. Those earthly connections that bind him most to selfhood are rent asunder. Family, friends, riches, comforts—all are forsaken. Even the formalities of religion are laid aside. In fact, the first touch of the true religious spirit in every case results in death, the death of the seed before the plant begins to sprout. "Leave all and follow me," says the Light; and the injunction is literally followed by every mystic in the first stage of his journey, which Western writers call the purificatory stage and which we call *sadhana* or *tapas*. It is a period punctuated by visions and voices, temptations and lapses, which are personified into angels and evil spirits in popular literature. Christ was tempted by Satan. Buddha was tempted by Mara, and Visvamitra by Menaka. Ramakrishna, too, had some of these experiences. He saw spirits and heard voices, and frequently fell into trances. The momentous struggle that was going on in his soul between the old and the new was often objectified, and the whole drama enacted before his very eyes. One day as he sat down to meditate he found a *sannyasin* emerging out of his body with a trident in his hand. The figure directed him to concentrate his mind on God and threatened that otherwise he would plunge the weapon into his body. Presently another man—the *pāpa-purusha*—came out of his body and was killed on the spot by the shining *sannyasin*, who, after this exploit, re-entered his body. In fact, this part of the saint's biography is a supernatural romance in which his mind is described as moving in a world of abstractions and spirit-voices, while his body remained so dead and motionless that birds would perch on it and serpents crawl over it.

At the same time Ramakrishna was disciplining himself in a most drastic way. He would clean closets like a scavenger. He would eat food cooked by the lowest classes. He would eat the leavings of dogs. And he would make no difference between sandal and filth. No wonder therefore that everyone thought he was mad. He himself feared that his mind was going to pieces. In the agony of his heart he cried, "Mother, is this the result of praying and wholly surrendering myself to thee?" But in the very next moment he would say, "Let it be as thou wishest. Let this body go to pieces, but leave me not. Reveal thyself to me ; be kind to thy help-

less son, O Mother. I have taken shelter at thy lotus feet. Thou art my only refuge."

His prayer was heard at last. For a female *sannyasin* came on the scene. She understood Ramakrishna's case and began to help him in his devotions. Under the direction of the Brahmani, as she was called, the saint passed through the tantric *sadhana*. The philosophy that underlies the system seems to be that sensuality must be met on its own ground and that deification of the objects of desire would lead to the realization of God more swiftly than the renunciation of them.

The most remarkable feature of the purificatory period of Ramakrishna is that he was not satisfied with any one system of discipline. Scarcely had he finished his tantric *sadhana* when he began to experiment as it were with the various types of Vaisnava *sadhana*. Fortunately, however, he was led on from emotional mysticism, in which many a weak-brained *sadhaka* is engulfed, to a more virile experience. An itinerant monk called Tota-puri arrived at Dakshinesvar and by a single glance he discovered that Ramakrishna was an advanced seeker after truth. Would he learn Vedanta? Ramakrishna readily consented, and was soon initiated. He joined the sacred order of *sannyasins* and began to learn Advaita philosophy. We are told that, on the very first day on which he practised Advaita *sadhana*, he got into *nirvikalpa samadhi* and remained in that state for three days. The *guru* stood by wondering and exclaimed, "Is it possible that this man has attained in the course of a single day what took me forty years of strenuous practice to achieve?" Tota-puri remained with him for eleven months and taught him the philosophy of Sankara in detail. Ramakrishna henceforth became a *jnani* as well as a *bhakta*. Reality became as much a state of his own soul as a beloved person outside it. In one of his sayings he clearly brings out the relation between *jnana* and *bhakti*. He compares the former to a terrace and the latter to a staircase. Both are made of the same materials. The terrace is the Absolute realized in *samadhi*, in which the self and the world are blotted out. The staircase is the world of names and forms—the manifestation of the Absolute to the human sense. We go up and down, sometimes resting on the terrace, and sometimes on the steps of the staircase.

Ramakrishna's religious training was thus complete. But under the stress of the terrible *sadhanas* that he had passed through his health broke down. After a long *samadhi* of six months, during which he sat still like a dead body, uncon-

scious of the passing of day and night, he had an attack of dysentery. He suffered from it for many months and was taken out of Dakshinesvar to his native village for a change. This ends the first act of the drama of his life.*

(To be continued)

HINDU MYSTICISM †

A copy of *Hindu Mysticism* by Prof. Surendranath Das Gupta has been lying on our table for some time. Prof. Das Gupta delivered six Harris lectures on the development of Indian mysticism at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, U. S. A., in 1926, and they have now been published in the form of this volume. The term mysticism covers a very wide ground and it is as rich and complete as life itself. He has therefore confined himself to the delineation of only the main types of Indian mysticism in their mutual relations. Mysticism, in his opinion, means "a spiritual grasp of the aims and problems of life in a much more real and ultimate manner than is possible to mere reason." Thus the author in course of his six lectures has very ably dealt with the flowering of human life in its varied aspects, its gradual ascent in the scale of spiritual values, experience, and spiritual ideals.

In the first lecture he has described the sacrificial mysticism which, though not a mysticism of a superior order, develops, without doubt, many features of the higher types and marks the starting point of the evolution of Indian mysticism. The Vedic hymns—the earliest records of humanity—are nothing but the spontaneous outpourings of the heart of the primitive people of India, who were deeply impressed with the magnificent panorama of Nature's beauty. The fervid imagination of these ancient sages afterwards freed itself from the entanglements of natural phenomena and turned to the forces behind them as personified deities and ultimately arrived at a synthetic conception of the unity of Godhead. But when we come down to the sacrificial stage of development we find that the hymns uttered in praise of the deities came to be used as mere commands or injunctions for the performance of certain sacrificial duties. For with the Vedic people the sacrifices performed in strict accordance with these formulæ were more powerful than the Gods who could be propitiated or displeased by the mere performance

* From *The Journal of Religion*, Chicago.

† *Hindu Mysticism* by S. N. Das Gupta, M.A. Ph.D. (Cal.), Ph.D. (Cantab.), Late Lecturer in the University of Cambridge, England; Late Professor of Sanskrit, Chittagong College, Bengal; Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta. Published by the Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago; London. Pages xx + 168. Price \$2.00.

thereof. These commands were thus conceived as self-revealed, unalterable, transcendent and omnipotent and as capable of conferring material advantages upon individuals, if faithfully adhered to. Thus the assumption of the mysterious omnipotence of the sacrifices performed in accordance with the Vedic injunctions, independent of reason or discursive thought, forms the salient trait of the mysticism of the Vedic type. But human imagination went beyond this crust of objective law realistically conceived, and intellectualised the material sacrifices by the process called "substitution-meditation." The mystical powers were supposed to dwell not in external performances but in specific forms of meditation, which were thought to produce results equally beneficial. In this way from the continuous meditation of one entity burst forth in the minds of Vedic thinkers the highest idea of Self and the world-mystery. When the conception of the Highest was once formed, a natural tendency to search after Brahman also sprang up in the inmost chamber of their heart.

II

In his second lecture the author goes on to the discussion of the type of mysticism of the Upanishads which form the concluding portions of the Vedic literature. The Upanishads are but mystical experiences of the soul gushing forth in an unceasing stream of beauty. As a matter of fact, it is in these Upanishads that one meets with the earliest instances of a sincere quest after Brahman—the Highest. The Upanishads reveal to us the different phases of thought and experience. In the whirlpool of fleeting pleasures, the real content of human existence is altogether lost sight of. We live more for the body than for the soul. Thus in our mad pursuit after the phantom shows of worldly vanities we fail to realise that the dull and insipid life we are living has had the effect of stifling the spiritual instincts and longings of the soul. The beautiful stories such as those of Virochana and Indra, Yama and Nachiketas as found in the Upanishads serve only to accentuate the transitoriness of worldly objects and the ultimate reality of Brahman, the realisation of which cuts the Gordian knot of the heart and dispels all doubts from the mind for ever. In fact, the Upanishadic mysticism consists in the earnest quest for the spiritual illumination—the realisation of the absolute truth. The Self or the Brahman can be intuited only by the person to whom it reveals its own nature. It is beyond the ken of human intellect or reason;—it is, in short, an ineffable experience where all ordinary experiences are submerged and one infinitude of blissful experience exists at this stage of non-conceptual intuition of the Self.

III

The author in his third lecture on Yoga mysticism lays some stress on the question of the fundamental conditions requisite for the perception of the ultimate truth. The Shastras boldly assert that the soul and the mind are not one and the same thing; it is only the creative ideations of the mind that seem to obscure the spirit; but when the

coloured dome of mind will be broken, in other words when all mental processes will be quashed, the light of spirit will shine forth in all its native glory. The Yoga system of Patanjali prescribes some processes such as postures, breath-control, breathing exercises, washing of the impurities from all the important cavities of the body, as ancillary means to the removal of the veil of nescience that screens the self-luminous spirit from our blurred vision. Yoga means the disintegration of the mind in one vast ocean of ecstatic beatitude; and to attain to that blissful stage, disinclination (*Vairāgya*) to all worldly pleasures and sense-gratification is absolutely necessary; and the non-conceptual vision of the spirit is granted to the aspirant only when he is able to bring his unwieldy mind under perfect control. Thus in short, the process of Yoga described in the Yoga mysticism consists of a threefold course viz. high moral elevation, physical training of the body for the Yoga practice and steady mental concentration, which ultimately leads to a knowledge of reality as it is.

IV

The Buddhistic mysticism—the subject-matter of his fourth lecture—consists in a belief in the essenceless state of Nirvana as the ultimate perfection to be realised by the complete extinction of desires and supra-intellectual wisdom of the Yoga-practice. The system of Yoga enunciated by the Buddhists is very much akin to that of Patanjali though there is a good deal of theoretical difference between the two. The highest perfection with the Buddha is absolute extinction whereas with Patanjali it is the liberation of the spirit as self-illumination. The ultimate mystic stage of Buddhist Nirvana has been described in some passages in the Buddhist literature as “blissful” and in other passages it is held to be like the extinction of a flame. However, it is to be admitted that both are too deep and unfathomable for ordinary comprehension and as such are transcendent in their nature though the methods of their realisation are largely similar. Asceticism or self-mortification is also advocated as one of the means to the extinction of desires; for desirelessness which stops the accretion of the fruits of Karma (actions) is held to be an indispensable ethical desideratum for all spiritual achievements.

V

His fifth lecture is mainly confined to the classical forms of Devotional mysticism. The classical mysticism i.e. the mysticism of the Gita and the Bhagavata Purana advances a compromise between the worldly life of a householder and that of absolute renunciation though it leaves sufficient room for any aspirant to lead a life of absolute renunciation apart from society or social obligations. It discards self-mortification and believes in the three kinds of *tapas* viz. physical discipline, speech-discipline, and mental discipline which lead to the purification of the mind. The mysticism of the Gita lies in “a belief that the performance of allotted duties without any tinge of personal attachment and with the dedication of all fruits of the action (*karma*)

to God leads a man to the highest realisation;" in the Bhagavata Purana on the other hand the superabundance of love for God has been given a superior place. To the eye of the true Bhakta (devotee) though all beings are but manifestations of God's power, yet for all empirical purposes they are quite different from God. The love which is not motivated by any prospect of personal gain and manifests itself in the soft melting of the heart, in tears, etc. was best illustrated in the life of Chaitanya—the Love-angel of Navadwip in Bengal. The ideal of liberation paled into insignificance before the maddening passion of love for the Beloved Lord of Brindaban, the soul-enthraling music of whose divine flute was a perennial spring of inspiration to him. In this scheme of life even the ideal of the extinction of desires as enjoined in the Gita is replaced by that of participation in the drama of divine joy and the desires or sense-inclinations are given a full play in the direction of God.

VI

The last, though not the least, is the popular form of Devotional mysticism. The author has so far confined himself to the treatment of the different forms of mysticism as portrayed in Sanskrit writings; but in this last lecture he deals with the mysticism of divine love that found expression in the vernaculars of North India and of the South. The author has, moreover, enriched this chapter with a pen-picture of the holy life and religious beliefs of the great saints whose doctrines served only to swell the tide of Hindu religious thought rolling down from time immemorial in an unbroken stream of continuity. At the very outset he refers to the Alvar saints of the South whose doctrines were more or less similar to the Bhakti mysticism of the Bhagavata Purana and the Gita. The Bhakti movement of the South, says the author, dates from Jñaneswar and Namdeva to Tukaram (i.e. from the 13th to the 17th century), while that of North India is represented by Kavir, Nanak, Tulshidas, Mirabai and the like. The essence of the different systems is gradually filtering down into the minds of the people in general. The spontaneous love for the Beloved is not bound by any earthly limitations. In the tiller and the grocer, in the educated or in the uneducated, it springs forth in its native spontaneity and sweetens the myriad troubles in which they drag on their existence. The all-consuming passion of love for God is the Bhakta's eternal stay in Him and an end in itself and is dearer to him than liberation or any other goal of religious realisation. The Bhakti cult has thus watered the hearts of the masses of India irrespective of caste or creed and still finds an eloquent expression in the pastoral mystical songs of the love of Krishna and Radha.

In conclusion the learned author justly regrets that it is only "the educated or Anglicized Hindu who dazzled by the gay colours of the West turns a deaf ear to the old tune of his country—the flute of Krishna calling from afar through the rustling leaves of bamboos and green groves of the village-homes." He asks, "What have you gained if you have never tasted in your life the deep longing for deliverance or

divine joy? What have you gained if you have not tasted the joys of self-surrender, if your heart has not longed to make of you a flute in the hands of Krishna, that master-musician of the universe, and if you have not been able to sweeten your life with a touch of the Beloved?"

This, in short, is a brief summary of the author's book on "Hindu Mysticism"; and his beautiful exposition of the various phases of the development of Indian mysticism testifies, without doubt, to his thorough grasp of the leading principles underlying the religious movements of India from the Vedic age up to the present day. The style of the author is lucid and refreshing; and in view of the beautiful arrangement of the subjects, their intrinsic worth and masterly delineation, the volume is indeed a welcome addition to the stock of philosophical treatises. We gladly recommend the book to the enlightened public.

J. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Vireswarananda

Swami Vireswarananda, President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, has been touring in the Andhra province for the last six weeks. The main purpose of the tour has been to popularise our literature among the people, and so far he has been eminently successful in his efforts. He visited Ichchapuram, Berhampore, Parlakimedi, Chicacole, Vizianagram, Vizagapatam, Rajahmundry, Bezwada, Ellore, Anantapur and Cuddapah; and in many of these places he delivered lectures and gave discourses on the ideals of Vedanta, and also held private conversations to explain them to interested people. The Swami is expected to extend his tour further south, and we are sure his travel will succeed in widely propagating the ideals of the Ramakrishna Order.

Swami Paramananda

Swami Paramananda of the La Crescenta Ananda-Ashrama and the Boston Vedanta Centre, arrived at the Belur Monastery on the 14th February. He came via Pacific and touched at Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Penang and Rangoon on the way. The Swami had a very crowded programme in each place. At Singapore he had to deliver as many as twelve speeches. At Rangoon he spoke thrice on the same day. Everywhere people received him with great kindness and enthusiasm and gave him addresses of welcome.

This time the Swami's stay in India will not be long.

R. K. Mission Flood Relief in Gujarat

Having carried on the flood relief for full six months Sri Ramakrishna Mission has closed the work of all the five centres on the 5th February. The total number of houses constructed and repaired in British, Baroda and particularly in Cambay State villages amounts to 916. The Relief party arrived at Bombay on the 7th February.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FIRST LESSON

Each individuality must be cultivated. All will meet at the centre.

"Imagination is the door to inspiration and the basis of all thought."

The explanation of nature is in us ; the stone falls outside, but gravitation is in us, not outside.

Those who stuff themselves, those who starve themselves, those who sleep too much, those who sleep too little, cannot become Yogis.

Ignorance, fickleness, jealousy, laziness and excessive attachment are the great enemies to success in Yoga practice. The three great requisites are :

First. Purity, physical and mental ; all uncleanness, all that would draw the mind down, must be abandoned.

Second. Patience. At first there will be wonderful manifestations, but they will all cease. This is the hardest period. But hold fast ; in the end the gain is sure if you have patience.

Third. Perseverance. Persevere through thick and thin, through health and sickness ; never miss a day in practice.

The best time for practice is the junction of day and night, the calmest time in the tides of our bodies, the zero point between two states. If this cannot be done, practice upon rising from and going to bed. Exquisite personal cleanliness—daily bath—is necessary.

After bathing, sit down and hold the seat firm, that is, imagine that you sit as firm as a rock, that nothing can move you. Hold the head and shoulders and the hips in a straight line, keeping the spinal column free ; all action is along it and it must not be impaired.

Begin with your toes and hold each part of your body perfect, picture it so in your mind, touching each part if you prefer to do so. Pass upward bit by bit until you reach the head, holding each perfect, lacking nothing. Then hold the whole perfect, an instrument given to you by God, to enable you to attain Truth, the vessel in which you are to cross the ocean and reach the shores of eternal truth. When this has been done, take a long breath through both nostrils, throw it out again and then hold it out as long as you comfortably can. Take four such breaths, then breathe naturally and pray for illumination.

"I meditate on the glory of that Being who created this universe ; may he illuminate my mind." Sit and meditate on this ten or fifteen minutes.

Tell your manifestations to no one but your Guru.

Talk as little as possible.

Keep your thoughts on virtue ; what we think we tend to become.

Holy meditation helps to burn out all mental impurities. All who are not Yogis are slaves ; bond after bond must be broken to make us free.

All can find the reality beyond. If God is true, we must feel him as a fact, and if there is a soul, we ought to be able to see it and feel it.

The only way to find if there is a soul is to be something which is not the body.

The Yogis class our organs under two chief heads—organs of sense and organs of motion, or of knowledge and action.

The internal organ or mind has four stages. *First*—Manas, the cogitating or thinking faculty, which is usually almost entirely wasted, because it is uncontrolled ; properly governed, it is a wonderful power. *Second*—Buddhi, the will (sometimes called the intellect). *Third*—Ahankara, the self-

conscious egoism (from *Aham*). *Fourth*—Chitta, the substance in which all the faculties act, the floor of the mind as it were, or the sea in which the various faculties are waves.

Yoga is the science by which we stop Chitta from assuming or becoming transformed into several faculties. As the reflection of the moon on the sea or the waves is broken or blurred by the waves, so is the reflection of the Atman, the true self, broken by the mental waves. Only when the sea is stilled to mirror-like calmness, can the reflection of the moon be seen, and only when the "mind stuff," the Chitta, is controlled to absolute calmness, is the Self to be recognized.

"Mind stuff" is not the body, though it is matter in a finer form, and it is not eternally bound by the body. This is proved as we get occasionally loosened from it. We can learn to do this at will by controlling the senses.

When we can do that fully, we shall control the universe, because our world is only what the senses bring us. Freedom is the test of the higher being. Spiritual life begins when you have loosened yourself from the control of the senses.

He whose senses rule him is worldly—is a slave.

If we could entirely stop our mind stuff from breaking into waves, it would put an end to our bodies. For millions of years we have worked so hard to manufacture these bodies that in the struggle we have forgotten our real purpose in getting them, which was to become perfect. We have grown to think that body-making is the end of our efforts. This is Maya. We must break this delusion and return to our original aim and realize that we are not the body, but that *it* is our servant.

Learn to take the mind out and see that it is separate from the body. We endow the body with sensation and life and then think it is alive and real. We have worn it so long that we forget that it is not identical with us. Yoga is to help us put off our body when we please and see it as our servant, our instrument, NOT our ruler. Controlling the mental powers is the first great aim in Yoga practices. The second is concentrating them in full force upon any subject.

YOU CANNOT BE A YOGI IF YOU TALK MUCH.

SECOND LESSON

This Yoga is known as the eight-fold Yoga, because it is divided into eight principal parts. These are :

First—Yama. This is most important and has to govern the whole life ; it has five divisions :

1st. Not injuring any being by thought, word or deed.

- 2nd. Non-covetousness in thought, word or deed.
- 3rd. Perfect chastity in thought, word or deed.
- 4th. Perfect truthfulness in thought, word or deed.
- 5th. Perfect sinlessness in thought, word or deed. (Non-receiving of gifts.)

Second—Niyama. The bodily care, bathing daily, dietary, etc.

Third—Asana. Posture,—hips, shoulders and head must be held straight, leaving the spine free.

Fourth—Pranayama. Restraining the breath (in order to get control of the prana or vital force).

Fifth—Pratyahara. Turning the mind inward and restraining it from going outward, revolving the matter in the mind in order to understand it.

Sixth—Dharana. Concentration on one subject.

Seventh—Dhyana. Meditation.

Eighth—Samadhi. Illumination, the aim of all our efforts.

Yama and Niyama are for life-long practice ; as for the others, we do as the leech does, we do not leave one blade of grass without firmly grasping another. In other words, we have to thoroughly understand and practise one step before taking another.

The subject of this lesson is Pranayama, or controlling the Prana. In Raja Yoga breathing enters the psychic plane and brings us to the spiritual. It is the fly-wheel of the whole bodily system. It acts upon the lungs, the lungs on the heart, the heart upon the circulation, this in turn upon the brain and the brain upon the mind. The will can produce an outside sensation and the outside sensation can arouse the will. Our wills are weak ; we do not realize their power, we are so much bound up in matter. Most of our action is from outside in. Outside nature throws us off our balance and we cannot (as we ought) throw nature off her balance. This is all wrong ; the stronger power is really within.

The great saints and teachers were those who had conquered this world of thought within themselves and so spoke with power. The story of the minister confined in a high tower who was released through the efforts of his wife who brought him a beetle, honey, a silken thread, a cord and a rope, illustrates the way we gain control of our mind by using first the physical regulation of the breath as the silken thread. That enables us to lay hold of one power after another until the rope of concentration delivers us from the prison of the body

and we are free. Reaching freedom, we can discard the means used to bring us there.

Pranayama has three parts :

- 1st. Puraka—inhaling.
- 2nd. Kumbhaka—restraining.
- 3rd. Rechaka—exhaling.

There are two currents passing through the brain and circulating down the spine, crossing at the base and returning to the brain again. One of these currents called the "Sun" (pingala), starts from the right hemisphere of the brain, crosses at the base of the brain to the left side of the spine and re-crosses at the base of the spine like one-half of the figure eight.

The other current, the "Moon" (ida), reverses this action and completes this figure eight. Of course, the lower part is much longer than the upper. These currents flow day and night and make deposits of the great life forces at different points, commonly known as "plexuses," but we are rarely conscious of them. By concentration we can learn to feel them and trace them over all parts of the body. These "sun and moon" currents are intimately connected with breathing and by regulating this we get control of the body.

In the Katha Upanishad the body is described as the chariot, the mind as the reins, the will as the charioteer, the senses as the horses and the objects of the senses as their road. The self is the driver seated in the chariot. Unless the driver has understanding and can control his horses, he can never attain the goal, but the senses like vicious studs, will drag him where they please and may even destroy him. These two currents are the great "check rein" in the hands of the charioteer and he must get control of them and control them. We have to get the power to become moral ; until we do we cannot control our actions. Yoga alone enables us to carry into practice the teachings of morality. To become moral is the object of Yoga. All great teachers were Yogis and controlled every current. The Yogis arrest these currents at the base of the spine and force them through the spinal column. They then become the current of knowledge, which only exists in the Yogi.

Second Lesson in Breathing :—One method is not for all. This breathing must be done with rhythmic regularity, and the easiest way is by counting ; as that is purely mechanical, we repeat the sacred word "Om" a certain number of times instead.

This pranayama consists in closing the right nostril with

the thumb and then slowly inhaling through the left nostril, repeating the word "Om" four times.

Then firmly close both nostrils by placing forefinger on left one and drop the head on the chest and hold the breath in, mentally repeating the "Om" eight times.

Then lift the head erect and removing the thumb from the right nostril, exhale slowly through that, repeating the "Om" four times.

As you close the exhalation, draw in the abdomen forcibly to expel all the air from the lungs. Then slowly inhale through the right nostril, keeping the left one closed, repeating "Om" four times. Next close the right nostril with thumb, drop the head, hold the breath while repeating "Om" eight times. Then lift the head erect, uncloze the left nostril and slowly exhale, repeating "Om" four times, drawing in the abdomen as before. Repeat this whole operation twice at each sitting, that is, making four paranayamas, two for each nostril. Before taking your seat it is well to begin with prayer.

This needs to be practised a week, then gradually increase the number of breathings, keeping the same ratio, that is, if you make six pranayamas, repeat the "Om" six times at inhalation and exhalation and twelve during kumbhaka. These exercises will make us more spiritual, more pure, more holy. Do not be led aside into any byways or seek after power. Love is the only power that stays by us and increases. He who seeks to come to God through the Raja Yoga must be strong mentally, physically, morally and spiritually. Take every step in the light.

Of hundreds of thousands only one soul will say, "I will go beyond and I will penetrate to God." Few can face the truth, but to accomplish anything, we must be willing to die for Truth.

THE LURE OF THE UNIVERSAL VISION

BY THE EDITOR

It has been remarked that *Prabuddha Bharata* has been devoting of late too much attention to things secular. *Prabuddha Bharata* is dedicated to the task of awakening the spiritual instincts of men, inasmuch as spirituality alone can fulfil men's highest ends. We plead guilty to the charge that our articles have not been all purely spiritual. But in doing so, we want to add a few words in explanation.

There cannot be the least doubt that the fulfilment of man lies in realising himself as pure spirit, as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss absolute. It is an ineffable experience, transcending all relative consciousness. And oh the ecstasy of it! Whoever has seen even the shadow of it, has reached even its outermost fringe, finds himself engulfed by the tumultuous waves of ecstasy. This ecstasy is the end and aim of life. This is the goal towards which all efforts should be directed. Help given in attaining this goal is the most precious help that one can render to another. And we always wish we could render that help in abundance. Not that *Prabuddha Bharata* is lacking in this kind of stimulus. Surely we are not unmindful of this supreme duty. If we have been devoting our attention to other things also, we have good reasons for it.

The age we are living in is extremely critical and complex. Never in the past has the world been so beset with problems as in the present time. The whole humanity has come perilously together. And this sudden contact of widely various peoples has let loose powers which are difficult of understanding, much less of control. It is sometimes thought that contact of different peoples is of necessity a good thing. That is not so. Not all may come together. Just as free mixing of individuals is not often good, so also is not the free mixing of races and nations.

First of all, when two or more peoples come together, they necessarily react on each other. We say *each other*, but as a matter of fact, it is the stronger or strongest of them that exerts the most powerful influence over the others, and these latter have to submit timidly to that influence without much power to resist. The result is scarcely beneficial to either party. The conquering party becomes insolvent and the defeated lose their individuality and become eventually little more than names. Human history is dark with many instances of such destruction. If a growing civilisation wants to preserve and defend itself, it must learn how to isolate itself from the destructive influence of overbearing civilisations, and must not come out of this self-imposed isolation until it has been strong enough to withstand and judge such influence.

Not all cultures and civilisations have the same motive and end of growth. Each has its individual ideal. It is natural therefore that the greatest attention is paid by a people to its central interest. The main theme of the nation's thought absorbs its best powers, and other aspects of life are comparatively neglected. Then again, there are ups and downs in a nation's life as in the life of an individual. There are periods

of comparative decay and stagnation, of weakness and barrenness. These are the periods of great catastrophes to nations. During those times, the nation must raise protective walls around it and save itself till it is reinvigorated and fit to face the world-forces squarely. Of course, such an ideal arrangement, practically speaking, is scarcely possible. So it happens that there are foreign aggressions, political and cultural. The result, when the invaded nation succeeds in surviving the attack, is that a comparison is set up between the parties. The aggressive party cares little, at least in the beginning, to profit by the new acquaintance. But the defeated one sets itself assiduously to imitating the victor. It discovers many real and imaginary virtues in its master, and considers itself as devoid of essential qualities. It takes for granted that the prominent qualities of the victorious nation are *the* qualities to be assiduously cultivated. It loses faith in its own ideal and in the central theme of its life. It so happens that the invading nation has cultivated certain aspects of life which the conquered nation has considered secondary. There is naturally a suicidal over-appreciation of those aspects by the defeated nation. Such a state of things is scarcely beneficial.

Of course, these disastrous consequences can be avoided if the conquering nation be generous. Collective generosity however is a rare thing. No nation, unless it has intrinsic spiritual virtues, can be generous to other nations by mere choice. It must be habitually and naturally charitable. Charity is the outcome of a spiritual outlook on life. Only a spiritual nation can be charitable to other nations. Those who are engaged in material aggrandisement, or are at best intellectual, cannot be kind to other peoples. History is strewn with broken dreams because of aggressive materialism or intellectualism. How many are the cultures and civilisations that are essentially spiritual? Few, very few indeed. Therefore whenever different races and cultures have come together, there have inevitably been clash and conflict and scarcely amity.

Now it so happens that in India at present, and to certain extents all over the world, men's problems are mostly problems of readjustment due to racial and cultural conflict on account of sudden mingling of widely different peoples of the world. We in India are finding things very difficult for us. Everywhere, in every department of life, there is only doubt and uncertainty and conflict of ideals. These doubts and conflicts must be resolved if we are to live again with vigour and purpose. We cannot shut our eyes to them and content ourselves with

following our individual spiritual pursuits. They are forcing themselves on our consciousness, draining us of all vitalities.

The most obvious conflict is of course political and economical. Who does not feel that unless we are politically and economically improved, we shall be reduced to the last straits within a short time? The world-forces are acting in such a way that unless we are up and doing, we shall be soon nowhere. And yet political and economic improvements cannot be made by pious wishes. In India so many different interests require to be reconciled! Our classes and masses both require to look at things from a different angle of vision. Old mediæval ideas of politics will scarcely do in the present age. There can be no doubt that in these departments we have to sit at the feet of the West. Yet mere blind imitation will scarcely avail. Western statecraft will have to be modified in the light of the Indian genius. Such a consummation is not a question of mere choice, but of absolute necessity. So deep thought, clear understanding and constructive work are urgently needed.

Take the question of Indian economics. We certainly had our own system. But in the mean time the modern Western system has imposed itself on us. It may be full of faults. May be it is antagonistic to the Indian genius. But the fact remains that it is a stern reality in our socio-economic life. We cannot ignore it. What are we to do with it then? We cannot reject or fight it out. We have to *assimilate* it. Our institutions have to be modified in accordance with the new system. But this modification is not an easy task. Here again earnest thinking and action are urgently needed.

Then there is the question of education. Education, we need not mention, is the very basis of national development. But what kind of education shall it be? No one has yet been able to give us very clear ideas. Each is trying in his own way. Some are trying to go back to the old orthodox ideals. Others are frankly ultra-modern. Others again are seeking to combine the two extremes in varying degrees. But the combinations do not seem to meet the need in proper measures. Here again is a problem of the most intricate nature, demanding the closest attention of the best minds of the country.

What about social readjustment? What shall be the ideal? And what the methods? Social reformers have yet to find out right answers.

Then there is the paramount question of cultural readjustment. The Western culture is pressing heavily on us. How much of it is good, and how much evil? Can all its evils be avoided? If so, how? Or are we to submit helplessly to its

onslaughts? We do not believe that we can escape its influence. There are elements in the Western culture which are lacking in our own, and which we must assimilate if we are to rise up again as a powerful nation. And there are tendencies in it, which though apparently evil, must yet be accommodated. We cannot, for instance, avoid following the West in exploiting material resources and powers of nature, though we are sure the Western overemphasis on matter is ultimately an evil. Western powers of organisation again are too marvelous not to be imitated. We also must learn the secret of organisation, if we are to survive as a people.

There is also the question of religion. Religion as it is understood and practised by us at present, must undergo radical changes. May be, for individual purposes, our present theory and practice of religion are enough. Not so from the national view-point. For, if religion is to serve as the basis and primal motive of our collective life, it must harmonise itself with the other aspects of life. It cannot survive if it promulgates contrary ideas or practices. There must be no internal conflict in the national scheme of life.

All these must be given the closest attention. And herein comes the need of devoting the resources of *Prabuddha Bharata* to so-called secular problems as much as to spiritual problems proper. For we hold that unless and until these are solved properly, even individual spiritual realisation will become more and more difficult. Man cannot make his spiritual life an unconnected, isolated thing, apart from other concerns of his life. Unless he can so realise his material and mental life that they would not clash against his spiritual ideals, he will find his spiritual ideals growing more and more unreal and less and less capable of drawing the homage of his soul. We must therefore give as much attention to the consideration of our material and intellectual problems as to the spiritual ones.

It may be said that it is enough if one attains spirituality; —one need not trouble oneself with the collective problems; if one somehow becomes spiritual, one's subtle influence will create an atmosphere of peace and harmony, and that is what after all matters. We regret we cannot subscribe to this belief. We admit that if we could have such spiritual persons in abundance, we might do without caring much for other things. But the main question is: can spiritual persons be produced under any conditions? Have not the nation's material and mental conditions an essential connection with its spiritual growth? If there is, does it not follow that though there may be born a few spiritual persons now and then, the general

spiritual level will become daily lower and lower unless we improve the material and mental setting of spiritual life?

We have therefore given our devoted attention to the consideration of national problems in their various aspects, and we have tried to present the solutions in the best way possible, showing eventually that our national interests do not require us to deviate from our ancient spiritual ideals, and that our religion, in its true and fundamental form, is really the greatest solvent of our national doubts. We hope we have succeeded, at least partly, in showing the direction towards which our collective aspirations should be made to rise. And we hope we have thereby helped the intrinsic spirituality of our readers, at least indirectly, if not directly. We have tried to make the spiritual paths of our readers easier, and still easier for the posterity.

The more important fact however is that this age is seeking to conceive religion from a new angle of vision. This age requires a religion which will subsume all the best aspirations of mankind. Our old spiritual ideals were sufficient for the past times in which they were evolved. Those ideals were more or less individualistic. This age wants to practise spirituality also in its collective aspect, as it is manifesting itself in the diversified forms of human achievements. This is the age of harmony. We must each become an embodiment of not merely one ideal of man, but of all ideals. We must become each an epitome of humanity. This will not only make man more perfect, but will also succeed in spiritualising what has been considered secular so long. This is the goal towards which humanity is moving.

Now, if this new universal ideal of spirituality is to be made a reality, we need to take up all aspects of life and hold them up to the transforming light of the Divine: we must make of them a garland of which the thread will be Divinity. Nothing should be rejected. There is nothing of man which is not Divine. His history, politics, industry, economics, art, science, philosophy, society, education, his life and his death, all are parts of a Divine drama, manifestations of the inner Immortal Being. This new vision we want to hold before our readers. And we are seeking to infect them with the necessary enthusiasm to change their old outlook and aspire after the vision of the *Virat*, the Universal. This is the new spiritual ideal which was emphasised by the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. Verily he was the incarnation of *Man*. In him the very heart of humanity throbbed. His heart beat in unison with the heart of mankind. And nothing was insignificant or

unspiritual to him. He spoke of the history of men with the same devotion and enthusiasm as he did of God and his doings. The two were not separate to him. Aye, this is the new ideal that we must place before us, and *Seva*, service, shall be the method of its realisation. Our God is the God that has become men and our worship is the service of men.

The West is, by its marvellous discoveries and inventions, realising the external unity of men. But alas, its methods of unifying humanity are as much destructive as constructive. It is seeking to create external unity, but external unity avails little if there is not the inner, spiritual, unity. We do not see any other nation than India, which can make this gift of spiritual unity to mankind. This is the great mission of India. But if India is to discharge its duty properly, India must not only aspire after individual all-forgetting, transcendental, spiritual ecstasy, but must also realise that which is immanent in men. The combination of the Transcendental and Immanent is what is wanted.

This is a welcome sign among our young people that the woes and sufferings of India have touched their heart deeply. This feeling is the raw material out of which the Transcendental-Immanent Vision is to be built up. The young minds are seeking for light. They want to understand their country and its problems. They want a synthetic ideal. We must feed these minds. If *Prabuddha Bharata* by devoting itself to so-called secular problems succeeds even partially in helping these struggling souls, it will consider its labours sufficiently repaid.

OBEDIENCE AND DISCIPLINE

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

The power of obedience is what we, as a people, require. It is a mistake to imagine that obedience is a form of servility. True obedience is one of the noblest expressions of freedom. If the problem ended with the act of submitting the will to a higher authority, India would have enough, if not too much, of obedience. But in fact this is only the initial step. The whole question of how and when lies beyond this. The authority being chosen, obedience is free. Most of us exercise this privilege when we select our work in life. With the task, we accept its conditions. Eminence is only attainable at the price of steadiness and reliability in keeping them.

But before freedom comes training. The child must be disciplined that man may be free. Discipline means, before all things, the mastery of how to obey. Obedience, to be of any value at all, must be immediate, instinctive, precise. It must not depend upon a knowledge of reasons,—for in that case, it ceases to be obedience altogether,—but must be loyal, not to the man of approved judgment, not to the brain of greatest genius, but simply and solely to the man in charge, the constituted authority, the man at the helm, in that particular enterprise in which we have enlisted.

The supreme type of obedience is found in the ship. A moment of peril arises. Instinctively every member of the crew springs to his place. Each man, we may suppose, is a trained seaman, but are his eyes fixed on the ocean, on the enemy, on the conditions of the moment? By no means. Such a state of affairs would spell ruin and defect. Every man's eyes and ears are on the captain. He alone surveys the scene. He alone can estimate the chances of success. He alone is responsible for the action of all. We may choose our authority freely. But once chosen, we must obey blindly. Even the crew of Christopher Columbus, threatening rebellion from hour to hour, did not attempt disorderly disobedience. As long as they had not deposed their captain they obeyed him. Even in a mutiny the new authorities are constituted before the old are disposed of.

A trained and disciplined crew in the hour of crisis becomes one man, and that man the captain, the leader, the chief. He may not be the ablest man on board by any means. But as long as he is in command, the ability of his subordinates must be expressed in carrying out his will. And this even if his will lead to catastrophe. The man under orders has one duty, and one duty alone to carry out his orders. The fact that those commands may be foolish and headstrong, that they may carry him and his into the depths of the ocean, or lead them to the mouth of the roaring cannon, is none of his business. He is there to obey, and if need be to obey blindly. When the charge is sounded at Balaclava, when the admiral signals to bring the vessel too near its companion-ship, then is the moment to remember the words of the Gita: "Better for a man is his own duty, however badly done, than the duty of another, though that be easy."

This duty of obedience can only be rightly balanced by the responsibility of the leader and commander. On him rests the overwhelming burden of wisdom and discretion, of the maintenance of his own authority and also of its rightful use.

The subordinate who feels it in him to outshine his own officer, may very possibly be right in his estimate of their relative ability, but for the present, and until he himself has reached the sovereign position, the responsibility of judging, directing and determining is not on him.

Let him think and contrast methods as he will, but let him in the meantime keep silence and obey. Criticism of the superior officer is disloyalty. Disobedience is mere chaos. The man who would gather power of government must act, and think in silence as he acts.

On this twofold discipline,—the discipline of obedience and of responsibility—rests the power of humanity to fuse, to act in unison. This power, to be complete and perfect, must never be at the bidding of the emotions, nor even at that of the judgment. We must obey the superior because he is the superior, not because we approve of him or admire him, still less because we love him. Our power to obey must be entirely at the disposal of our will. We must obey because we are determined to obey. No shilly-shallying, no reasoning-out of premises. No re-trying of the case. Once we have accepted him, the chief is no longer on his trial before us. What is on trial is our own power. In the moment of acceptance or rejection of a given authority, in that instant of discrimination, lies the whole freedom or bondage of man.

Prompt, perfect, precise obedience. How is the child to be trained to this? Strange as it may sound by a twofold experience. There must be a part of his life in which a responsiveness to command which is military in its instantaneousness is required of him. But this must not be the whole. If this were to cover the whole of his life, he would grow up weak, servile, and incapable of sound judgment. The other half of the child's life must consist of perfect freedom, freedom and self-government. This he finds in the absence of his masters, amongst his comrades and in the playing-field. In these intervals of spontaneity and self-direction, he has the opportunity of realising and practising the virtues learnt under the restraints of discipline. If all were control, the character would be ruined in one way: if all were indulgence, it would be warped in another. A slave and vagabond, the creature of rules that he dare not break and the spoilt darling, none of these is a MAN, and men are what we must make of our children. Amongst nations there is no other test of efficiency. That people which has the greatest power of sustained and concerted action is the strongest; that which has least, the weakest. But

the nature of the discipline that is to produce such power, is the concern of parents and schoolmasters, for the faculty has to be built up during the earliest years of childhood.

II

To the great,, strength is first necessary, and next, discipline. It is the discipline we have had that determines our power of endurance. Power of endurance is always the result of discipline. By great impulses alone little is achieved. They sometimes bring about ill instead of good.

The youth of European nations is full of iron discipline, and to this they owe their success in combination. The schools attended by the English boys of the upper classes have been called by a thinker "one long reign of terror." From the moment a boy enters till the day when he leaves, he is the centre of a conspiracy of his peers to punish the slightest outburst of egotism or other offensive trait. This accounts, perhaps, for the mechanical head clerk type of distinction which so often seems to be the Englishman's main idea of greatness. It is quite clear that any individuality which survives five or six years of such treatment must either be lofty and persistent or a mere justification of mediocrity. Yet individuality of a noble kind does emerge sometimes, and it is easy to see how beneficial, on the whole, must be the effect of such a training on the average. Above all things, it breeds *the power to act in concert*, the power to distinguish between one's own whims and the main issues at stake, the power to suppress self in the interest of the community. In England, at any rate, it is this trait which distinguishes the ruling classes from the ruled, and it is their want of it that makes what we may call the *sudra* causes so contemptible in the eyes of aristocracies.

The Irish, compared with the English, are an undisciplined race. Historically, Ireland escaped both the Roman Occupation and the Protestant Reformation, and in these she lost two great chances of schooling. The fruit of her want of discipline is seen in her constant failures at united action, in her tendency to split every main party into half a dozen sections, in turbulent characters and aggressive bearing. Yet it is this very race, under changed conditions of discipline, that provides generals and commanders-in-chief for the armies of England.

European races concentrate their education on the man himself. They are not trying to bolster up this society or that institution. The European man is essentially an adventurer, and the world is his field. His career is in himself. He inherits

nothing but his personality. He accepts no master but him whom he has himself elected. Having elected, however, he follows through thick and thin. It is this that makes him so strong when he sets up 'pack-law' as the supreme sovereign. In the fulness of his freedom he chooses to be ruled. No other rule has such power as one thus created.

In Asia the undivided family is the source of all discipline and the goal of all effort. Instead of the hardened muscle produced by the constant friction of public opinion, we have here the warm heart and delicate emotions that go with ties of blood. No wonder Asia has produced saviours! The individualism of Europe has no means of sounding the heights and depths of love. But instead of true discipline, the family can offer only a pattern, a mould, into which the individual has to fit. Let certain forms of respect, certain habits of religion be duly fulfilled, and the family has no more test to offer. It may be that one, with the capacity of a hero, rises within its bounds. Instead of jealous rivals, he is surrounded by applauding kinsmen. Instead of a task constantly growing in difficulty, he meets with praise too easily. The great fault of the family, as civic unit, is that it *forgives too much and trains too little*.

A discipline that remains the same age after age comes to be an added fetter, instead of an occasion for the birth of a faculty. All education ought to end in freedom. The new task develops the new powers. Europe itself shows signs of becoming socially stereotyped, even as she once imagined Asia to be. Only by the action and reaction of these two upon each other, can the future mobility of the human intellect be secured. This action and reaction constitutes what the Swami Vivekananda called "the realisation and exchange of the highest ideals of both East and West." The histories of nations prove their significance by the men they produce. But in the end we have to remember that humanity is one, that the whole spiritual heritage of the ages is for each one of us.

Again to quote the Swami Vivekananda, "The ultimate unit must be psychological. The ideal Hindu may be same man born in the far West or North. The typical occidental character may appear suddenly in some child of Hindu or Mahomedan parents. Mind is One, and man is mind; he is not body."

All that humanity has achieved, then, in any of her branches we may make our own. What the genius of another race has led it to create can be ours. What the genius of our race has led us to create can be made theirs. The true possessions of

mankind are universal. We whose strength is in feeling may proceed to assimilate severe new disciplines. They whose uniformity tends to become a danger may educate themselves on our family-ideals. Thus proceeds the great exchange, and man climbs painfully that mountain whose head is in the clouds.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

By HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE TEMPLE MONASTERY

In the beginning, Swami's idea of persuading Swami Brahmananda to assume leadership of the movement in America seemed a possibility, but as the quarters being built for his use neared completion, Maharaj sent final word that he could not leave the work in India.

Swami accepted his decision as the will of the Divine Mother, and after a short time, on the urge of Mr. and Mrs. Peterson and others he took up his own residence in the flat which he had prepared with so much thought and care for Swami Brahmananda. He had not lived there two months when he was inspired with the thought that the third flat would be just the place for a monastery. There were a number of young men attending the lectures and meetings of the Society, one of whom had been living for six months in a downstairs room, and these Swami invited one by one to come and live in the monastery. Of those who were asked none refused, until ten were finally installed as inmates in the rooms of the monastery and in the tower rooms on the roof. This number was added to occasionally but the newcomers were not always permanent and the number remained at an average of ten. The young men were all engaged in various occupations and continued to earn their own living, contributing their share of the expense of the Monastery upkeep, according to their ability, until such time as they might either desire or were ready in Swami's judgment to take the vows of Brahmacharya.

A set of rules had been drawn up by Swami and each new member voluntarily subscribed to these rules. The day began at 4 a.m. with one hour's meditation class in the living room. At 5 o'clock was the morning bath, followed by the daily tasks of cleaning, sweeping, watering the plants, and all the routine

connected with the quarters. Each one did his own washing, kept his own room in order and in addition did a part of the general work. Swami instructed them that all work connected with the Temple was holy and that by doing such work in the true spirit, their minds would be purified and meditation advanced. Under the inspiration of Swami's presence and instructions everyone did his share gladly and the monastery inside and out was a model of cleanliness.

There were two main meals daily and Swami named them "Morning and Evening Service". The meals were opened with a chant and closed with a few minutes of silent meditation. Each student read in turn from one of the sacred Scriptures of the world, followed by questions, with answers by Swami, so that every meal became indeed a sacrament where the students ate the Bread of Life and drank the life-giving Waters of Immortality. At these meals the students heard many incidents of the Master's life and learned much about his methods of training his disciples. Swami constantly impressed upon the young men that eating was a sacred function and that all food should be eaten in the spirit of worship. That by so eating we feed every part of our being, physical, mental and spiritual. Meat, fish and flesh of every description were among the prohibited articles of diet, but curries and soups, with vegetables in abundance and variety, prepared in Hindu and Western style, gave a sufficiency of nourishing food.

Swami was fond of forceful maxims, and when some one at the table recited that great watchword of the American Republic, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", he made him repeat it, saying that the Holy Mother always exclaimed over such sayings, because they were the words of great men in every country and usually had a deep spiritual significance, leaving their impression on the character of the nation.

The Society possessed a rubber type outfit for printing notices of lectures which were tacked on the signboard outside every week for the following Sunday, and Swami asked one of the students, a printer, to print by hand this watchword and other mottoes and hang them in every room of the monastery. Among others of his favorite mottoes were: "Live like a hermit but work like a horse"; "Do it now"; "Watch and pray", to which he added one of his favorites, which he quoted constantly, especially to the disciple who may have been wavering: "Do or die, but you will not die".

Swami was a bountiful provider and always kept a full supply of food on hand. He was very solicitous for the health

of every member of the monastery and always urged every one to eat heartily and also provided the means for sufficient indoor and outdoor exercise. Swami thoroughly believed in singing as a spiritual exercise. In the early morning he often took the young men up on the roof of the monastery to sing devotional hymns and chants. A half mile distant was the bay of San Francisco, and sometimes Swami took them thither for the morning singing and meditation. At that early hour none were astir except the fishermen in their power boats, going to their fishing grounds and an occasional ship, putting out to sea. Usually the air was calm and still, and, as the voices rolled out over the waters of the wide bay, it must have been a source of wonder to the listening sailors and fishermen. A quartet of the young men also sang and furnished the music at the Sunday evening service.

Swami was a consistent example of regularity and punctuality. Always to bed later than the others, he was yet the first to rise. Needless to say, his life was under continuous scrutiny by some of the young men for purity of mind and any motives of worldliness. There were those who never questioned, but there were some doubters, or unwilling believers, and these were eventually satisfied, for all that they found in his character was the one consuming purpose to give his life for the salvation of others and that all of his undertakings were only means to that end. In common with the often expressed dictum of his great brother, Swami Vivekananda, he held to the belief that character, true manly or womanly character, is absolutely essential as a foundation for the spiritual life. As a disciplinarian of the highest order, he was well qualified for the building of such character. Through all the life of a disciple he never lost sight of this point and never hesitated to apply the necessary instruction or discipline for the benefit of the disciple once he was convinced of its necessity.

Consequences never deterred him. To the genuine disciple he would say: "I don't mind if I break every bone in your body, so that I can drag you up to the shores of the Ocean of Immortality and throw you in; then my work will be finished."

It cannot be said too often that when Swami became convinced that it was right to do a thing, he acted immediately, regardless of consequences, for by nature he was absolutely fearless.

Sometimes young men disciples, or would-be disciples, came to Swami expressing their desire to live the ascetic life under discipline. Some had read the lives of saints and in their

minds' eye was the picture of a monk's cell, with an artistic ray of light streaming through a small window, associated perhaps with the idea of a diet of bread and water. To such Swami suggested they first spend a few months in the Temple monastery, as a preparation for the solitary life. To this they eagerly assented. They were then assigned sleeping quarters, usually in the same room with others and subjected to the limitations of privacy which such close contact brought. This was the first step in discipline, as nearly all were accustomed to sleeping in a room alone.

Then to their surprise, they sat down at least twice daily to wholesome and substantial meals. Nothing seemed to accord with their idea of asceticism. What they were really going through, however, was the necessary preparatory discipline of association. After two or three months they discovered that some of the hardest discipline lay in the conquest of the ego under the constant friction of this daily association. Some would make complaints of others to Swami. He would reply: "Did you not ask for discipline?" "Yes", they would answer, "but not that kind", and then would leave the monastery. Those who endured and made the best of everything and thus remained faithful were then ready for direct instruction from Swami. Those who conquered themselves and learned the true spirit of service to others look back on the years of their monastery life as among their most delightful memories.

The life of Swami was one long sacrifice and those who were privileged to be in his presence found their doubts and troubles melt away like snow before the sun. He veritably emanated holiness, for he ever lived in the consciousness of the Divine Mother. His life was also an example of self-discipline. As stated, he was always the first to rise and every moment from rising to retiring was full of ceaseless activity. He ever maintained his Sannyasin life and notwithstanding his various ailments, insisted on sleeping on the floor of his office, a light mattress being the only concession he would make to the entreaties of those concerned for his health and comfort.

In the ante-room next to the monastery kitchen there were several strings stretched across one end from wall to wall and dangling from these were a number of life-like spiders of different sizes and kinds. The young men at first thought they were there simply as a decoration, but one or two thought differently and, after various conjectures, approached Swami for the reason of their presence there. It seemed that from childhood Swami had an unaccountable feeling toward spiders.

Once while swimming in the Ganges, he came suddenly into a swarm of water spiders, millions of them. He received such a shock from the encounter that he could hardly reach the shore. It was to overcome this feeling, or rather to make sure that it no longer existed, that he hung up the artificial spiders where they could be seen by him a number of times a day.

In addition to his unceasing daily labors, Swami cooked all the meals for the monastery so that the young men might eat of food prepared by holy hands and blessed by a holy mind ; to the end that they might be purified through eating this holy food. Thus every act of their lives became an act of worship to help them along the path to blessedness.

In the month of March, 1906, the hearts of the members and friends of the Vedanta Society were gladdened by the news that another Swami was coming from India to act as assistant to Swami Trigunatita and on Thursday, August 2nd of the same year, Swami Prakashananda arrived and took up his residence in a room next to Swami's office on the ground floor.

After the monastery opened he came to eat with the young men at the morning and evening meals and it was not long before Swami turned over to him the conduct of the meals and the cooking itself, though Swami Trigunatita retained the actual control, and always cooked a special dinner on Sundays. The young men came to deeply love Swami Prakashananda for his unfailing cheerfulness under all circumstances and for his spotless purity of mind. They found him to be a true representative of the Divine Mother, his gentle, loving disposition winning every heart. He entered into all their trials and problems and was one of them. Regardless of self, wholly devoted to the service of all, he assisted in the work of the Temple, giving one or more of the three lectures on Sundays and humbly doing all duties no matter how tedious or lowly.

From the year 1913, one by one, by death and other reasons, the monastery membership began to diminish until only a few remained and the monastery finally was closed with the death of Swami Trigunatita.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—II

By SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

TASK BEFORE THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Individual salvation and uplift of humanity are the twin objects set before the Ramkrishna Order of monks. "Be gods and make gods" is our motto. Service of suffering humanity is looked upon not only as a form of spiritual discipline but also as a definite end in itself. The Order seeks to represent Sree Ramkrishna who lived solely for the uplift of humanity.

The Ramkrishna Mission has been organised with the avowed object of humanitarian service. It aims at giving a lift to human thoughts and aspirations by preaching spiritual ideas and ideals in the light of the lives and teachings of Sree Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and by putting them into practice through service of suffering humanity.

In India how can these ideas and ideals reach the hearts of the people who are every day dying by thousands for want of food, and medicine, sanitation and education? Says Mr. J. N. Gupta, M.A., I.C.S., in his presidential address before the Divisional Conference, (Presidency Division, Bengal) :—

"As regards the condition of the vast majority of our brothers and sisters is it necessary for me to weary you with details? I am sure you are all more or less familiar with that dismal and depressing picture. We all know that our physique is extremely poor, the ordinary span of our lives regrettably short, mortality amongst children is heavier than that in most countries, that we are prey to decimating epidemics and diseases which not only kill but enervate the race, that the majority of our people have extremely small material resources and hardly sufficient nutrition to withstand the ravages of disease, their poverty being due principally to the primitive and unprogressive condition of the staple industry of agriculture, and land having to bear an increasing burden from day to day on account of thoughtless multiplication of the people and the decay and disappearance of most of the rural industries; and lastly, that the vast majority of people are without any education, without any elementary knowledge of hygiene and health and without any higher standards of life—their entire resources and energies being consumed in meeting the clamant needs of the day. Of the total population of 47 millions of people of this province (Bengal) the above picture should apply roughly at least to 42 millions."

This is the condition of one of the advanced provinces of our motherland where we have to preach spiritual ideas and ideals. Our people cannot be in a mood to listen seriously to

our sermons until and unless we come down with intense feeling for their suffering and do all we can to help them out of ignorance and superstition to raise and educate them, to better their material and economic condition and to make them fit partners in any worthy scheme of national regeneration. Obviously this is a Herculean task and the Ramkrishna Mission certainly with its present strength cannot presume to cope with it. Still it does not behove the Ramkrishna Mission, which stands for the ideals of renunciation and service, to remain indifferent to the vital needs of the people, simply because the task is immense. To remain blind to the abnormal condition of our masses is simply inhuman. "Him I call a Mahatman whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a *duratman*", was the utterance of the illustrious founder of this organisation. This organisation must serve with its heart's blood the poor, the ignorant, the down-trodden, the disease-ridden inhabitants of this country, and try to practicalise the lofty ideas and ideals preached by Swami Vivekananda. We have to concentrate our strength and resources in order to give a lift to the people. Our efforts and achievements may be hopelessly inadequate for the immense needs of the people, but honest and sincere efforts proceeding from intense feeling will not go in vain. This will undoubtedly set the wheel rolling in the right direction; this will spread the ideals of service and renunciation among the classes, quicken their hearts, fire their imagination and move them to serve the masses.

If the five millions of this province, who are privileged to possess the material equipment of the twentieth century can be really stirred, if they can be made conscious of their immediate duty of raising the 42 millions to a decent standard of existence, the task in spite of its immensity will be accomplished in no time. The same thing holds good for each and every province of India. Such an attitude of the classes for serving the masses is absolutely essential before even the Government may dream of realising any scheme of uplifting our masses. In awakening this consciousness the Ramkrishna Mission has already contributed a good deal by serving the people stricken with disease or smitten with poverty by temporary or permanent relief operations. It may very well be said that we have already met with considerable success in transmitting the spirit of service to our people for relieving the distressed during floods, famine, and epidemics. So far as remedial measures are concerned the Mission is still doing its best to hold aloft its ideal of service and inspiring others to follow, and the time has surely come when

the Mission should seriously contribute its best towards preventive measures as well.

Education is undoubtedly one of the most effective and far-reaching preventive measures. A healthy man-making education adjusted, graded and distributed among all classes of people according to various needs and capacity, can go a long way towards safe-guarding them against poverty, disease, premature mortality, tyranny of landlords, caste-lords, money-lenders as well as sectarian and communal troubles of all sorts. Education is just the thing that is absolutely necessary to help this sleeping leviathan to stand on its feet. Education alone can shape the units properly and weld them together into a strong, virile and self-sufficient nation that will be able to fulfil the mission of this land by disseminating her glorious culture among the nations of the world. Sister Nivedita indulged in no hyperbole when she said that "all things are possible to the educated and nothing whatever to the uneducated man".

The world is not in a mood to listen to the gospel of Love and Truth from an imbecile nation. The nation must be rejuvenated, it must demonstrate that its culture, far from being the cause of enervation, is something that infuses a higher order of strength and dexterity combining Brahma-tejah with Kshatra-virya ; it must demonstrate by its actual achievements, and not merely by arguments and quotations from ancient history or Puranas, that on the bed-rock of its spiritual culture may be erected a civilisation no less worthy and efficient in any sphere of life, social, economic or political, than any extant civilisation on earth. This has to be demonstrated, before India will be in a position to command the reverent attention of the world to listen to the glories of her culture. Modern world seriously believes that our Vedantic culture makes men "other-worldly," that it has made our people hopelessly incompetent for the tasks of this life. This notion has to be corrected by practical demonstration. For this, the nation has to stand on its feet, healthy, strong and efficient with tremendous faith in itself and its glorious culture. And this may be effected only after the people are properly served with food—physical, intellectual and spiritual.

Indeed, serving India means literally to educate her people properly ; for of all her problems there is none so grave that cannot be solved by the magic word "Education."

It is, therefore, meet that this Brotherhood and this Mission should rise to the occasion and do all in their power to give a lead to the country in the light of the teachings of our revered

leader. Let us not err for a moment that his message differed a whit from that of his Master. He showed the path which will lead the world to fulfil the wish of his Divine Master.

And we all know the injunction he left for us in the Math rules that this Math should be developed into a full-fledged University for spiritual as well as secular education of the youths of this country. We also know how in one of the Madras lectures he gave the idea of starting teacher-training institutions for turning out teachers for the masses.

Let us, therefore, muster strong, concentrate all our available energy and resources to do something solid and substantial towards the permanent improvement of the conditions of our people by disseminating proper education and by inspiring and guiding others to do the same. Let us not forget what Sister Nivedita said :—

"We all know that the future of India depends for us on education. . . . We know also that this education to be of any avail must extend through all degrees from its lowest and humblest applications upto the highest and most disinterested grades. We must have technical education and we must have also higher research. . . . We must have education of women, as well as education of men. We must have secular education as well as religious. And almost more important than any of these we must have education of the people and for this, we must depend upon ourselves."

(To be continued)

WHAT AILS THE INDIAN PRESS

BY DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, M.A., PH.D.

*Lecturer in Political Science
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I take my hat off to the Indian press. It has its faults ; but considering the tremendous difficulty it has to work under, I believe that on the whole it is clean, strong, and powerful. It has a great future before it.

When I speak of the Indian press, I do not naturally include the Anglo-Indian sheets, not even the self-appointed "friends of India". Their greatest joy, as far as I can make out, is in the campaign of vilification and misrepresentation against India. I wish there were some ways of separating them from association with a country which seems to worry them too much. The reason I leave the Anglo-Indian press out of con-

sideration for the present is that it is pro-foreign and anti-Indian. It has no roots in Indian soil.

I am, however, greatly interested in the press of the Indian India. It is, as I said before, admirable. This does not, however, imply that it has no weak spots. It has. And what I intend to do here is not to sing a hymn of praise, but rather to tackle with uncompromising directness the harder and more ungracious task : note some of the common failings of the Indian press and see if they are absolutely unavoidable.

To begin with, there is much room for improvement in the general make-up of the Indian journals. They are badly printed and poorly inked. The carelessness in the matter of spelling is terrifying. Indian papers, I am aware, are not money-makers. They are among the most valient wolf-fighters of the world. They deserve hero-medals for keeping the wolf from the door as long as they do ; but what earthly use is there in printing papers from broken-down types and in faded ink which can hardly be read? I marvel at the Job-like patience of the long-suffering newspaper reading public which puts up with it.

Every country should develop its journalism on its own lines, work out its methods and techniques which are distinctly its own. In India the curse of the worst English journalism has fastened itself upon some of the best of Indian editors. Instead of trying to do something original, something unique, they seem to be constantly breaking their necks trying to ape London papers. Is there no way to down the ape? Why should we be content with fourth-rate imitation London sheets instead of first-rate Indian journals?

Let me cite an instance, out of many, which will illustrate this matter of blind imitation. It happens that a good many editors in London write a column-long editorial without breaking it into paragraphs. Now editors in India have taken to the same thing, apparently because it is done in London. They do not seem to realise that it is extremely difficult for a reader to wade through a column or two without a single break anywhere. It may be necessary, from the editor's point of view, to write lengthy editorials of the kind in order to impress the reader with his supposed erudition ; but is the paper produced for the good of the editor or the reader? After all, if one is to copy a foreign paper, why pick up the wrong one? The trouble is that many of our editors either do not know, or even care to know, that they are off the track. They are happy to wallow along the same old rut with the same old fossil idea. No originality, no initiative.

The Indian publishers, almost without exception, are free from intellectual and moral cowardice. They frequently "put on their courage like armour", and fight for the affirmation of life in India. I applaud their might and militancy. But the journalistic millenium is not yet, not by a long chalk. One of my complaints is that the whole tribe of Indian editors has exaggerated notions of its editorial wares. They appear to think that all that is necessary to make a newspaper is to hatch up a bunch of editorials. There is an astonishing dearth of news—local, provincial and international, especially local. The paucity of news articles can never be quite made up by any number of editorial opinions. Our newspapers should have more human interest articles, and more local color. The most severe indictment I can bring against the Indian newspaper is this: It is more of an opinion-paper than a newspaper. The scarcity of light, bright, and timely news articles is a major sin of Indian daily journalism.

I get papers, by every mail, from different parts of India. They are singularly lacking in individuality. Except for their editorialized opinions, they are almost all alike. They have scarcely any distinctive personality.

Just this morning I was going through a pile of Indian news-papers assiduously. They looked like standardized productions, such as Ford cars or Beecham's pills. They might have been published from one part of the country as another. I found in these papers the same sort of make-up, the same official ukases, the same canned Associated Press stuff, the same assortment of stereotyped political editorials only with different labels. They lacked, one and all, individuality, variety, local flavor. To me, as a practising newspaper man, the dreary sameness of Indian journalism throughout the vast sub-continent is appalling.

My idea of a newspaper is that it should reflect life in all its varied interests, tastes, and points of view. It is the duty of the news-gatherers to tell their readers not only what has happened, but also what is likely to happen, what is threatened, what is merely said. A good live newspaper, instead of being choked with editorials, should always come out "first with the news". It should print all the news it can dig up, all the news that is fit to print. It must present a vivid survey of actual life, without philosophical obfuscation. In other words, a newspaper should be more a mirror of life and less a pulpit for editorial preachments.

Publishers of Indian journals frequently profess, most

volubly, idealism. Some of them even pretend with grave faces not to be interested in money-making, their sole aim being the spiritual uplift of the people. The same gentlemen also go on publishing in their papers—week after week, month after month—acres and acres of gorgeous whisky and brandy advertisements. It is a strange phenomenon. I cannot for the life of me see that there is anything very idealistic in liquor advertisements. Indeed they seem to me, a man of academic vintage, more spiritous than spiritual, more alcoholic than idealistic.

The sober truth is that a great many of the Indian publishers will not hesitate to sacrifice an idealistic or an aesthetic principle if it will fetch them an extra rupee. I am using hard language, I know ; but I am merely saying right out what all sensible readers of the Indian press must be thinking audibly. Who, for instance, does not know the names of two or three of even the most prominent Indian magazines which continually affront their readers with ugly and dubious advertisements on their front page, on the very cover page itself? These shoddy, disgusting ads are so offensive that they give me a pain every time I look at them. And the same ad-grabbing editors deliver to their publications articles about the Beautiful! Americans are alleged to be most materialistic ; but there is not one first-class American magazine which defaces its front cover with advertisements. At any rate, it is not a convincing exhibit to prove that the Indian publications which flirt with questionable commercialism are altogether models of good taste or of aestheticism. If they are, I owe them an apology.

Journalism, as a learned profession, is still in its early adolescence in India. It has not yet received the same amount of serious consideration it deserves. What it needs now is full-time trained men who will devote their entire creative urge specifically to the newspaper profession. It is big enough to require every ounce of their energy, and absorb every minute of their life.

Unfortunately a large proportion of Indian journalists are using newspapers as a stepping-stone to some other profession. They act as if they are ashamed of their calling, and have no faith in it. That is precisely not the way to build up the profession of journalism. A newspaper man should put his professional duty first, last, and all the time before everything else ; he cannot permit himself to be seduced into any other business which would interfere in the slightest with his duty to newspaper-making. Quite frequently, I have noticed, an Indian publisher has one

eye cocked on political jobs, and another on the editorial chair. He is a drone of the profession. He forgets that "no man can serve two masters"—to pilfer a Biblical phrase. It is not a trifling matter I am discussing. To say that it is a serious situation is certainly not to overstate it. But I have said enough!

The criticisms I have dared to offer doubtless make unpleasant reading, and I shouldn't wonder if some one feels hurt. But as I intimated at the beginning, I am not without hopes for the Indian press. I esteem it and I love it, even though it is not quite near to my heart's desire. Backward as our newspaper is in some respects, it is ours. Greater progress, however, will come when we frankly recognize its merits and its defects, and then earnestly strive for a better and higher ideal in journalism.

"Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;
 . . dare, never grudge the throe."

STRUGGLE FOR EXPANSION

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The old dilemma whether the tree precedes the seed or the seed the tree, runs through all our forms of knowledge. Whether intelligence is first in the order of being, or matter ; whether the ideal is first or the external manifestation ; whether freedom is our true nature or bondage of law ; whether thought creates matter or matter thought ; whether the incessant change in nature precedes the idea of rest or the idea of rest precedes the idea of change ; all these are questions of the same insoluble nature. Like the rise and fall of a series of waves, they follow one another in an invariable succession and men take this side or that according to their tastes or education or peculiarity of temperaments.

For instance, if it be said that seeing the adjustment of nature of different parts, it is clear that it is the effect of intelligent work ; on the other hand it may be argued that intelligence itself being created by matter and force in the course of evolution could not have been before this world. If it be said that the production of every form must be preceded by an ideal in the mind, it can be urged with equal force, that the ideal was itself created by various external experiences. On the one hand the appeal is to our ever present idea of freedom ; on the other, to the fact that nothing in the universe being causeless, everything both mental and physical is rigidly

bound by the law of causation. If it be affirmed that, seeing the changes of the body induced by volition, it is evident that thought is the creator of this body, it is equally clear that as change in the body induces a change in the thought, the body must have produced the mind. If it be argued that the universal change must be the outcome of a preceding rest, equally logical argument can be adduced to show that the idea of unchangeability is only an illusory relative notion, brought about by the comparative differences in motion.

Thus in the ultimate analysis all knowledge resolves itself into this vicious circle, the indeterminate interdependence of cause and effect. Judging by the laws of reasoning, such knowledge is incorrect; and the most curious fact is that this knowledge is proved to be incorrect, not by comparison with knowledge which is true, but by the very laws which depend for their basis upon the self-same vicious circles. It is clear, therefore, that the peculiarity of all our knowledge is that it proves its own insufficiency. Again, we cannot say that it is unreal, for all the reality we know and can think of is within this knowledge. Nor can we deny that it is sufficient for all practical purposes. This state of human knowledge which embraces within its scope both the external and the internal worlds is called *Maya*. It is unreal because it proves its own incorrectness. It is real in the sense of being sufficient for all the needs of the animal man.

Acting on the external world *Maya* manifests itself as the two powers of attraction and repulsion. In the internal its manifestations are desire and non-desire (*pravritti* and *nivritti*). The whole universe is trying to rush outwards. Each atom is trying to fly off from its centre. In the internal world, each thought is trying to go beyond control. Again each particle is checked by another force, the centripetal, and drawn towards the centre, so in the thought-world the controlling power is checking all these outgoing desires.

Desires of materialization, that is, the being dragged down more and more to the plane of mechanical action belong to the animal man. It is only when the desire to prevent all such bondage to the senses arises that religion dawns in the heart of man. Thus we see that the whole scope of religion is to prevent man from falling into bondage of the senses and to help him to assert his freedom. The first effort of this power of *Nivritti* towards that end, is called morality. The scope of all morality is to prevent this degradation and break this bondage. All morality can be divided into the positive and the negative

elements ; it says either, "Do this" or "Do not do this." When it says, "Do not," it is evident that it is a check to a certain desire which would make a man a slave. When it says "Do," its scope is to show the way to freedom and to the breaking down of a certain degradation which has already seized the human heart.

Now this morality is only possible if there be a liberty to be attained by man. Apart from the question of the chances of attaining perfect liberty, it is clear that the whole universe is a case of struggle to expand, or in other words, to attain liberty. This infinite space is not sufficient for even one atom. The struggle for expansion must go on eternally until perfect liberty is attained. It cannot be said that this struggle to gain freedom is to avoid pain or to attain pleasure. The lowest grade of beings, who can have no such feeling, also are struggling for expansion and according to many, man himself is the expansion of these very beings.*

LETTERS OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[The next letter was received by me a fortnight later before I had replied to his first.—*Swami Ashokananda.*]

13th July 1927.

DEAR SIR,

Allow me to ask you some informations which will be necessary for me for the study on the life of the Swami Vivekananda. What *actually* is the influence of the Ramakrishna Mission in the world? Can you give me a rough idea of its monasteries and of the Sevashramas and the schools and hospitals and other dependent works in India? How many foreign missions have you and in what principal countries? How many reviews and papers and how many members are there in each particular branch? It will be very important for the European public to have an outline table of the activities of the Mission and its progress already made since the death of Swami Vivekananda.

In excusing me for troubling you, I pray you to believe, dear sir, of my devoted sympathy.

ROMAIN ROLLAND.

* Written by the Swami in answer to questions put by a Western disciple. Hitherto unpublished in *Prabuddha Bharata* and not included in the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*.

[I could not answer to the above letter till by the second week of September. The reply which I then sent was a long one and contained among other things the following passage in answer to his first question ("What actually is the influence of the Ramakrishna Mission?") : "Your question implies that you want a clear estimate. My answer to your fifth question has shown how difficult it is to give such a clear answer. The difficulty is enhanced by the facts that we do not represent any *special* set of doctrines and that our views are not at all sectarian but are the endorsement of all the truths of all creeds. When a religious body professes novel views, it can easily estimate its influence which it finds well demarcated from that of other sets of views. Our case is different. We stand for Hinduism in all its aspects (which is the synthesis of all religions),—for Vedanta which is the foundation of all Hindu doctrines. Vedantic ideas have surely spread over the world in greater or less degree and are still spreading. But it is really difficult, if not impossible, to say how much of this propagation is due to Swami Vivekananda and his Mission. There can be no doubt, however, that it is at least partly due to our Mission. The different sources from which Vedantic ideas emanated and spread over the Western world and countries outside India are: (1) Western Sanskritists, (2) Our Mission (from Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda onwards), (3) Later teachers and literature (including Tagore and Theosophy), . . . (4) Independent growth of Vedantic ideas owing to historical changes. What are the Vedantic ideas? They are mainly two: (1) The inner Divinity of man: Man is potentially Divine and possesses infinite goodness and power and therefore the treatment of man by society, state or religion should be based on the recognition of his inner potential Divinity and omnipotence; (2) Life's ultimate value is spiritual, and all human concerns to be truly fruitful must be controlled and guided in reference to this ultimate ideal. These are the two principal characteristics of the Vedantic teaching. It cannot be said that the West openly professes them. But I am inclined to think that these ideas, especially, the first one, are always in its subconscious mind. How did it get these ideas? I do not think that, Christianity* or the Greco-Roman culture are specially favourable to them. I think, in the first stage, the industrial, social and cultural changes, especially the progress of science, drove the West to those ideas, and was helped therein by Indian culture as disseminated by Western Orientalists. Many Western authors of the 18th and the 19th centuries show traces of Vedantic influence on their thought. In the later stages, I am sure Swami Vivekananda and his monks and their literature had something to do."]

4th Oct. 1927.

Dear Swami Ashokananda,

I cannot thank you sufficiently for your excellent letters and above all for the trouble you have taken in that of Septem-

* As regards the first idea—the Divinity of man.

ber 11th by replying so fully to my demands. Nothing could have better filled up the gaps in my knowledge and enlightened me on the actual position of the Ramakrishna Mission in face of the social problems which present themselves in India as in the world of to-day. I shall make use of these valuable reports in the final chapters of my projected work.

For the work is not yet written nor has even the preparatory outline been commenced. For a little over a year I have been collecting the essential materials ; and (according to my usual custom for each of my works), I allow the fire to be covered by the cinders until all may be inflamed. It would not be difficult to make up quickly a collection of impressions on so great a subject ; it is necessary to allow oneself to think over them in silence ; I hope that, during this coming winter, I shall be able to devote myself entirely to this work. . . .

My sister and I are extremely grateful to you for sending the numbers of "Prabuddha Bharata" Review, which we read with a keen interest, and for the "General Report" of the Mission. We have almost all the important books on the life of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda. Here are those which we still need :

1. Jnana-Yoga
2. Bhakti-Yoga
3. My Master
4. Memoirs of European Travel

If it would be possible for you to send them to us, we should be deeply grateful.

Your letter of September 11 has made me still more feel the greatness of your Mission and the fruitful wisdom of its calm and silent work. I shall inspire myself with these thoughts. On one point only I would present to you some observations : It is incontestable that a relationship reveals itself between the Vedantic ideas and many of the ideas and tendencies which are appearing now in the West. But I do not think that this is an effect (at any rate for the greatest number of them) of the modern diffusion of Vedantic ideas. In reality, this relationship rests on the identical foundation of human nature, and above all on the great Indo-European family. Whatever may be the agreements which unite the languages (and in consequence, the thoughts) called Aryan, of Asia and of Europe, these agreements are surely traced back to far distant times. Pascal has said these beautiful words in his *Pensées* (it is God who is looked upon to speak to man who is in despair

at not having found him): "Thou wouldst not seek for me if thou hadst not found me."

When I happen to read in any of your sacred texts of India or in your philosophers and poets, one of these revelations, which goes to my heart, I do not discover it as a new thought, I recognise it as one of my own hidden thoughts. It was written in me from all eternity.

It would be lessening the Divine, the Eternal, to imagine that there is a handful of grains in the hands of certain chosen men of a chosen race. The Eternal has sown himself with full hands over the whole field of humanity. The earth is not everywhere so fertile that the seeds may germinate. In some places it grows and produces fruit, in other places it sleeps. But the seed is everywhere. And turn by turn, that which is sleeping, awakes; and that which was awake, goes to sleep. The Spirit is always in movement from people to people, and from man to man. And no people and no man holds it. But it is the fire of the eternal life in each one,—the same Fire. And we live to feed it.

The two Vedantic principles which you have expressed to me, have been familiar to me from my childhood, . . . without my having been able to have the slightest knowledge of India and its thought. Whence did they come to me? They are diffused throughout the world far more than you imagine, as well in a certain Christian mysticism (Eastern in origin) as in a part of Hellenic culture (which she [Greece] also possessed through her great thinkers, from Pythagoras to Plotinus, in passing through Plato, and which plunged its roots in the world of Asia and Egypt as in Europe). And for us, men of the 19th century, we have had this magnificent fountain of idealistic pantheism: music—the powerful German music, and above all the heroic religious music of Beethoven. It was to us a metaphysic and a religion without words,—a Yoga-revealer. If you knew it well, you would see that the West has also in it its sublime discipline of being concentrated and absorbed in the Eternal. And the aspect of this German crowd of people swallowed up in the wonderful harmonies of a cantata or a mass of J. S. Bach is equal in its silent intensity and its burning ecstasy to the most devoted religious adorations of India. Add to this, that in the domain of pure thought the strong current which comes from Spinoza, the Dutch Jew of the 17th century, and which has its full action a century later in Goethe, whose:

substance we have not yet exhausted, and in the great German idealism of the beginning of the 19th century.

The Divinity of man and the Spirituality of life are two acts of faith for many of the highest spirits of the West and all time. One can even say that the first of these two principles was the "Creed" of certain of the thinkers who made the French Revolution. And although that has, by the misfortune of every precipitated action, set human masses in motion—masses obscure and violent, darkened in blood and in money, the Creed has remained intact with some choice people. I received it, as a child, from the hands of my forefathers. I pass it on in my turn.

The Best Europe, profound and reflective, is the sister of the Best Asia. The same blood of God flows in both. But Asia does not see all the silent struggles that her sister is making. . . .

Believe me,
Dear Swami Ashokananda,
Your devoted brother,
ROMAIN ROLLAND.

THE RELIGION OF VEDANTA

BY SRIDHAR MAZUMDAR

The whole world is now seething with sectarian wranglings and religious disputes. These conflicts will surely vanish if we only turn to the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of the world. If we cast our eyes downwards from the mountain peak, inequalities of the planes will at once disappear. The system of religion, preached in the Upanishads known as Vedanta, is a very catholic one ; it has no quarrel with any religion whatsoever ; it rather embraces in its fold all the religions of the world, and its echo still vibrates from the lips of Sri Krishna in the Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita, Chapter IV, Verse II, where He says, "It is My Path, O son of Pritha, that men tread everywhere."

Vedanta preaches that the whole universe, with all its animate and inanimate contents, emanates from, lives and moves in, and ultimately dissolves in Brahman, the Universal Soul (Chhandogya Upanishad, Chap. III, 14, 1 and Taittiriya Upanishad, Bhṛiguvalī, I, 1) ; that though the universe is a transformation of the energy of Brahman, Brahman is not

exhausted in the universe ; the whole creation covers only a fraction of It ; but by far the largest portion remains unmanifested, which is Its transcendent aspect (Chhandogya, Chap. III, 12, 6) ; that emancipation lies in having a thorough knowledge, and realization of the true nature of Brahman, attainable by Love :—"By Love he knows Me intimately and thoroughly, who am I and what am I" (Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita, Chap. XVIII, 55).

A question may now arise as to what is the real nature of Brahman. It is extremely difficult for the finite individual soul to get at once a clear conception of the Infinite Universal Soul ; and more so to express it in adequate language. Different commentators of the Brahma Sutra give apparently different versions of the nature of Brahman ; but they all base their conclusions on the authority of Sruti which is the outcome of direct intuition of the Seers of old, called Rishis. To doubt any of these versions is to doubt Sruti itself ; which is regarded as sacrilege by the wise. We must reverentially bow to them all and maintain that all these different Srutis about the nature of Brahman are perfectly true as they are all equally weighty. The illustrious Sankara, in his theory of absolute monism (Adwaita pure and simple), has taken Brahman in Its transcendent aspect, which is unquestionably true if we leave out of account the universe which is only an insignificant factor in comparison with the unmanifested portion of Brahman ; the devotional Ramanuja, in his theory of differentiated monism (Visishtadwaita), has treated Brahman in Its immanent aspect, which is also very true in respect of the phenomenal world with which we are primarily concerned ; the strongly pious Madhva, in his theory of dualism (Dwaita), has taken Brahman in the light of the creator and all the manifested things as created beings, which is also relatively true. As all these views are true in respect of the particular aspect of Brahman dealt with by them, each in his own way, the real nature of Brahman is an adjustment of all these views, as taken by Acharya Nimbarka without entering into any quarrel with any other commentator, in his theory of monism standing side by side with dualism (Dwaitâdwaita).

Having Infinite Brahman as the ultimate goal, none can cherish any perverse idea against any religion whatsoever ; as every religion of the world preaches the worship of Brahman either personal or absolute, differing only in nomenclature but remaining everywhere the same in substance.

It is not possible for every individual to realise at once

the Infinite Universal Soul ; Vedanta, therefore, prescribes stages, beginning from dualism, to be pursued step by step and ending in all-embracing monism. Even in dualism Vedanta does not oppose when different processes are taken up for the cultivation of devotion and the worship of God in the light of the father, the mother, or the most intimate friend to suit one's own nature and capacity, as in every process the ultimate aim is the realisation of Brahman.

Every religion of the world may find support in one or the other of the passages of Vedanta which is at the same time so cosmopolitan in principle that even the worst criminal, it holds, will not be lost for ever, but will some day find repose in the All-absorbing Brahman after purification by several births, proving thereby, the gospel truth that "I and my Father are one."

In the religion of Vedanta "Place is found," to speak in the language of the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis (Minister of the Theistic Church, London), "for the Transcendent Deity of Hebraism, and the Immanent Deity of Pantheistic Hellenism, and reconciliation of the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer with the personal God of the Christians."

It is indeed very strange that in a matter like spiritual culture where people should stand linked hand in hand, there should be so much bickering and bad blood disturbing the peace of the world, sometimes to such an extent as to culminate in blood-shed. But now an opportune moment appears to have come, as great men of the world are trying to put together their mighty intellects to find out the way to the world's lasting peace, of which the most powerful opponent is people's aversion to people ; this aversion can only be subdued by love as was found in the life of every prophet of the world.

People's innate tendency is to love others, which remains inoperative under the influence of several external and internal adverse circumstances ; these adverse circumstances may be surmounted if one only remains true to one's own altruistic instincts, as the fundamental principle in each and every religion is to love and to live for others. Aversion towards any religion in this world may be overcome if one only feels that one is but a link in the chain, and that every religion is a component part, of the universal religion of Vedanta. One breathing the bliss of the unlimited Brahman will refuse to be confined within the limited horizon of communal spirit.

An echo of Vedantism is heard also in the Sufism of the Mahomedans. In reality there is no material antagonism

between religions of the different communities except in the twisted brain of interested persons or impostors. It only behoves us to preach to the world and to make every individual feel that there is no conflict in the ultimate end and aim of life, that the aim of every religion is to realise the Supreme Spirit and that minor differences in the intermediate processes are negligible factors, tolerable and even permissible in view of the common goal.

The revered Sri Ramakrishna has shown by his personal example that there is no real conflict in religious ideals. At different periods of his life he followed, in his divine meditation, different paths prescribed in the different creeds of differently named religions without any bias or aversion to any faith of the world ; he was convinced in the very core of his heart that every religion leads to the same goal, namely, the realisation of the Supreme Being. So at the end, during the latter part of his life, he remained mostly absorbed in the Supreme Soul without recourse to any dogma or creed of any nomenclature ; and this we call the Religion of Vedanta.

With this lamp of Vedanta as our guide, I am sure, there will be no more quarrel with any member of any professed religion on earth. If we can only strain our soul to such a lofty pitch, all the differences on the way will disappear ; aversion will give place to affection, enmity to amity and selfishness to selflessness. With an Universal Fatherhood an universal brotherhood will be restored turning this earth into heaven purged from all dissensions and differences.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

By D. S. SARMA

Presidency College, Madras

(Continued from the last issue)

II

In the second act we find Ramakrishna in secure possession of light. His *jnana cakus* no longer winks, but is wide open. No violent exercises are required any longer to keep its gaze steady. Consciousness has been lifted once for all from a self-centered world to a God-centered world. The self is made aware of its high destiny. Or, to use a figure which is extensively employed in Western mystical literature, the

soul has put on the ornaments of chastity, humility, renunciation, and *yoga*. She wears them with ease and comfort. Now comes the period of her betrothal. The veil is removed from her face. She sees her Lord with her own eyes. She begins to verify the accounts given of the bridegroom by her spiritual parents. She finds that in every particular his loveliness surpasses her wildest dreams of expectation. But there is a new and strange experience of which she has not heard. For as she looks at him, her own form slowly undergoes a change. She feels she is being transformed into his likeness. Her ornaments of chastity and purity, her renunciation and *yoga* so highly priced in the world of men, melt and dissolve. They vanish, transmuted into something which no tongue of man can tell.

Ramakrishna says, "It is not the *jiva* that realizes Brahman. It is Brahman that realizes Brahman." Man as man cannot know God. To say that the soul meets God face to face is only a misleading metaphor. What we can see face to face is only a creature, not the creator. The creator is not an object. He is the eternal subject. As long as we look upon God as an object we only know *about* him. But to *know* him we must partake of his nature. How else can the knower be known? *Vijnataram are kena vijaniyat?* In mystic consciousness knowing and being are one. The more you become like God, the more you know him. *Jnana* is not *vijnana*. It is not a mere intellectual comprehension of truth. The author of *Theologia Germanica*, a famous mystical book of devotion of the fourteenth century, says, "In what measure we put off the creature, in the same measure are we able to put on the creator, neither more nor less. . . . If the creator shall enter in, the creature must depart; of this be assured." To the same effects are the words of Ruysbroek, a Flemish mystic: "In order that the creature may conceive and comprehend God it must be drawn up into God from above; it is only *by God* that it can comprehend God."

The mystic not only sees God, but also begins to partake of his nature. The danger, however, is that he may choose to live apart from the world and live in lonely contemplation of the spiritual kingdom he has discovered. He has already cut himself off from the world in his *sadhana* period. He has lived, in the words of Brother Lawrence, as if there were none in the world except himself and God. But after the end of *sadhana* it is only mystics of a feeble nature that are preoccupied with transcendental joys and continue to neglect the

and that therefore their lives are lost to us. This statement may be true of the lesser mystics, but not of the great mystics of the East. The Buddha, after his enlightenment, went to Benares and set the wheel of law in motion. The author of the Bhagavad Gita taught that spiritual union or *yoga* was intended for no other purpose than that of co-operation with Isvara in carrying out his will in the world. All the Bodhisattvas of our Mahayana Buddhism after their illumination became the saviors of their race. Even Sankara, who is supposed to have taught a philosophy of quietism, did not hide his light under a bushel. He travelled all over the country teaching the true doctrine and stamping out heresy. Why, the whole history of India before her downfall may be described as an unsuccessful attempt on the part of her spiritual leaders to construct a grand socio-political edifice on the basic teachings of the Upanisadic mystics. No true Indian mystic ever failed to lead a creative life after his illumination. In fact, his life of activity is closely bound up with that other life in which he is in union with God. The so-called "unitive" stage of the mystic's career has thus two aspects—that of eternal rest and that of incessant activity. For God is both *nirguna* and *saguna*. He dwells both in eternity and in time. Accordingly, the *yogi* who has attained union with him is both a contemplative and a man of action. He is a crusader as well as a psalmist. His outer career is one of lifelong fight against ignorance and evil with the cleanest weapons of his age. But his inner spirit dwells serene on the heights of eternity. The two aspects of truth which we arbitrarily classify as dynamic and static find their reconciliation in his nature as in God's. In partaking of the nature of God the *yogi* becomes like him—an active-passive entity, Isvara and Brahman in one. Incessant work and eternal rest are mysteriously reconciled in one and the same person. That is the ideal which the Bhagavad-Gita sets before us: "He who sees rest in activity and activity in rest—he is wise among men, he is a *yogi* and he is a thorough man of action."

While admitting the necessity of creative activity, we in the East have to protest against the doctrine that a life of practical work is to be rigorously exacted of every *yogi*. Religion is not mere philanthropy, any more than it is mere righteousness. Fussy social service is not the only way to serve God. Even the Gita, which lays so much stress on the life of action, tells us, "Far inferior is mere action to the discipline of the mind." In other words *bhakti* first and philanthropy after-

ward. It is better that we pay some attention to our private characters before we think of public service. Nothing roused the wrath of Ramakrishna so much as the talk of social service before the cultivation of a true religious spirit. The conversation between him and Kristo Das Pal is worth quoting in this connection :

Mr. Pal happened to observe, "Sir, this cant of renunciation has almost ruined the country. For this reason the Indians are a subject nation to-day. Doing good to others, bringing education to the door of the ignorant, and above all improving the material condition of the country—these should be our duty now. The cry of religion and renunciation would only weaken us. You should advise the young men of Bengal to resort to such acts only as will uplift the country."

"You appear to be a man of poor understanding," replied Ramakrishna in an animated voice. "By reading two pages of English you think you have known everything in the world. You seem to think you are omniscient. How dare you talk of helping the world? The Lord will look to it. You haven't got the power in you to do this. I know what you mean by helping others. To feed a number of persons, to treat them when they are sick, to construct a road or excavate a well—isn't that all? These are good deeds, no doubt. But how trifling in comparison with the vastness of the universe! How far can a man advance in that line? How many people can you save from the jaws of famine? . . . Well, God alone can look after the world. Let man first realize him. Let him get his authority and be endowed with his power ; then and then alone he can think of doing good to others."

It was in 1879 that the first disciples came to him. And from that date to the last day of his life, in 1886—that is, for seven years—Ramakrishna talked incessantly and poured out the treasures of his heart. All that we know of the gospel of Ramakrishna is from these wonderful informal talks. It is well known that his favourite disciple was Narendra, who, under the name of Swami Vivekananda, afterward became the St. Paul of the Ramakrishna movement. He has recorded for us what happened at an interview which he had with his master before he was converted. We are told that Ramakrishna suddenly approached Narendra and touched him. The effect had better be described in Vivekananda's own words. "The touch at once gave rise to a novel experience within me. With my eyes open I saw that the walls and everything in the room whirled rapidly and vanished into nought, and the whole universe,

together with my individuality, was about to merge in an all-encompassing mysterious void. . . . I was terribly frightened and thought that I was facing death. Unable to control myself, I cried out, "What is this you are doing to me? I have my parents at home." He laughed at this, and, passing his hand over my chest, said, "All right! Let it rest now. Everything will come in time." I was myself again and found everything within and without the room as it had been before." This incident shows the magnetic influence which Ramakrishna exerted on those who appeared to him as the chosen vessels. It is also very pleasing to note the tender love and the parental affection which the saint had for his spiritual children. "He alone knew how to love another," says Vivekananda of his master; "worldly people only make a show of it for selfish ends."

It is remarkable that Ramakrishna laid upon his disciples no such terrible *sadhanas* as he had laid upon himself. In fact, when one of them, in the fervor of his devotion, wanted to be initiated into *sannyasa*, straightway the saint replied with a charming humanity, "What will you gain by renouncing the world? Family life is like a fort. It is easier to fight the enemy from within the fort than from without. You will be in a position to renounce the world when you can bestow three-fourths of your mind on God, but not before." To another he said, "What is the necessity of giving up the world altogether? It is enough to give up the attachment to it." At the same time Ramakrishna, like a true Hindu, passionately believed that *sannyasa* and all that it means constitute the goal of life. Whatever our individual frailties may be, we belong to a race that loves asceticism. We worship the *kashaya*, the saffron robe. It is to us what the laurel was to the Greeks. For we have all been brought up in the shadow of the great renunciation of our beloved prince, Siddhartha. "One *must* renounce," whispered Ramakrishna in the ear of Narendra during his last illness. "When you see everything saturated with God, can you see anything else—the family, or the like?" "When palm trees go up," he said on another occasion, "the leaves drop off by themselves. Caste observances also go like that. But don't tear them off as these fools do" (meaning the violent reformers).

In the teachings of Ramakrishna during what I have called his creative period there was nothing original or new. For Ramakrishna came neither to destroy nor to fulfil. He bore testimony of the eternal truth of the *Sruti*. He is a branch of

that true vine. He does not speak as one of the scribes, but with authority. Accordingly the formulas of the older mystics glow on his lips with life and truth. It is marvelous how the theological discussions of generations are often summed up by him in a single parable or image which looks like the final word on the subject. Take, for instance, the problem of evil. Is evil real or unreal? What is its relation to God? Why is it unsubdued by the omnipotent? We have endless discussions on these questions. Ramakrishna in simple language says, "Evil exists in God as poison in a serpent. What is poison to us is no poison to the serpent, but a natural secretion. The serpent does not die of its own poison. On the other hand, the secretion is a condition of its health. So evil is evil from the point of view of man. What *we* regard as evil is nothing of the kind from the point of view of God. In other words, from the absolute standpoint there is *no* evil." His view has naturally been assailed by others, and we have an acrimonious controversy on the eternity and the authority of the Veda. Let us hear Ramakrishna on the question. He says: "When a thorn gets into the flesh, one takes it out with another thorn and then casts both away. So relative knowledge alone can remove the relative ignorance which blinds the eye of the self. But the man who attains the highest *jnana* does away with both knowledge and ignorance in the end. Hence both are *avidya*." Again, "Scriptures only point the way to God. Once you have known the way, what is the use of Scriptures? The next step is to work your way to the goal." Ramakrishna was once asked, "When shall I be free?" His pithy answer was, "When 'I' shall cease to be." There in a nutshell we have the teachings not only of the Vedanta, but also of all the great mystics of the world. One more instance: "Are not rites and ceremonies the mere husks of religion?" "Yes," says Ramakrishna, "but without the husks the paddy does not grow in the soil. You can't sow rice."

What is most valuable to us in the Ramakrishna literature is, however, not so much the teachings as the experience of the saint and mystic. All great religions are founded on the spiritual experience of mystics. Christianity is the systematized experience of Jesus, St. John, and St. Paul. Islam is based on the experience of Muhammed. Buddhism is based on the experience of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Our own religion is founded on the experience of the Vedic *rishis*. The Sruti is the testimony of those who have experienced in their hearts the eternal and living truth. It does not rest on any external

authority. It does not depend for its existence on the historicity of any man. Hinduism has no human founder. It is not afraid of the so-called "higher criticism" of its scriptures. It does not fight shy of the advances in science. For its own conclusions are as scientific and as much open to experiment and verification as those of science. We have, no doubt, our creeds and dogmas. But they are like the formulas of science, useful for the layman and the beginner. Our priests teach us these on external authority, for in matters of institutional religion authority is the principle of continuity. But for those who are in earnest about religion there is the internal authority, namely, the experience of our saints and mystics, which is the ultimate ground of belief. We have only to make that experience our own by going through the disciplines they prescribe, and we shall see for ourselves the validity of the spiritual laws revealed in our scriptures. In the roll of illustrious witnesses who have repeatedly borne testimony to the living truth of the Veda from age to age, among the many names of *rishis* and *sannyasins*, of *avatars* and *acharyas* who have guided the footsteps of Indian humanity in the ways of the Lord, the latest name is that of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.*

(Concluded)

REVIEW

DAYS IN AN INDIAN MONASTERY by Sister Devamata. 344 pp. 10 illustrations. Price Rs. 4-8-0. Published by Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, U. S. A.

"Days in an Indian Monastery," a new book which has just come from the press, promises to be one of keen interest to all classes of readers. Its author, Sister Devamata, lived in India among the Hindus as one of them and shared freely in both their outer and inner life. For more than a quarter of a century she has been in unbroken touch with India and some of India's greatest spiritual teachers. The teaching of one of these weaves itself in and out through the pages of the book. As she repeats this teaching it has the vibrant, living tone of its original utterance.

The book breathes the very spirit of India. The author, in her descriptions conveys the atmosphere and colouring of an India never seen by the usual traveller—an India which she loved and made her own.

She gives a remarkably vivid pen-picture of both the ancient Indo-Aryan civilization and the India of more recent times. But whether

* From *The Journal of Religion*, Chicago.

REVIEW

she writes of the ancient Vedic period, describes the customs of the present time or recounts the more common incidents of every-day life she weaves around the telling a wonderful and elusive charm.

In the chapter on "Spiritual Practice and Religious Observances" she reveals how fundamental is spiritual aspiration in all ages and among all peoples, varying as its expression may be.

With a particularly tender touch she draws aside the curtain to show us the shy and retiring Indian woman in her home life.

A light touch of gentle humour gives warmth and brightness to many of the pages and we can readily see how through that quality she formed an added bond of closeness with the people of whom she writes.

A high note is struck in each chapter. It sounds in such passages as these :

"Between the wall and the Temple runs a garden where gardenians and other flowering shrubs lift their blossoms as petalled censers from which stream forth unseen clouds of sweet perfume."

And again :

"One by one they slipped away from the haunted house and the tangled garden to taste the freedom of the open road or the quiet solitudes of the high hills."

The chapter entitled "The Presence in the Temple on the Ganges" closes with these words :

"A parting visit to the Head Monastery carried us to the opposite bank and as the boat pushed out into midstream again the voices of the monks in the chapel reached out across the water sounding above the surging of the river and the splashing of the oars. They were singing in rhythmic Sanskrit the evening hymn. The boat moved swiftly with the current, and as we swept on, these closing words of each verse followed us with yearning reiteration :

'Without Thee, O Lord, we are helpless,

Therefore, O Thou Friend of the helpless, we take shelter in Thee.'

It was a call to the Presence in the Temple."

Through Sister Devamata's revelation we can see most clearly the byways of the India of sacred history and with her we can "hear again the flute of Sri Krishna or the later call of Chaitanya to sing and dance in praise of Hari the Lord." She also gives many pictures of modern India.

She says :

"India is not peculiar in having the caste system. It exists in every race and nation. What differentiates her is that caste with her has been made hereditary. Whenever this occurs, crystallization takes place, social rigidity follows and values are distorted. An artificial measure of things is set up and social relationships become forced unnatural. This is true whether the unit of division is money, rank, power or learning."

Sister Devamata has had wide experience of European life and draws many interesting and illuminating parallels between the social usages and customs of Europe and Asia.

The author's style which is fluent and graphic possesses a fine

literary quality. Her careful observation, wide experience and keen insight lend the present volume a flavor that is rarely found. The book is a recital rich in feeling and noble thought—an enthralling narrative.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Mission Ashrama, Sarisha

The Ashrama, of which the report for the years 1925 and 1926 are lying before us, is situated in a village, and it has addressed itself primarily to the village reconstruction work. There is an upper primary school for boys and also a girls' school,—for education must claim our first attention. Weaving is taught in the primary school and a troop of Boy Scouts has been formed out of the village boys. There are of course, religious instruction and medical help from the Ashrama. These various philanthropic works were done during the years: relief to the poor, the needy and to poor students, distribution of clothes and blankets, *mela* relief works and small-pox relief at Kamarpole. There is also a free library for the benefit of the village in the Ashrama. Village reconstruction is a very important work and we hope the Ashrama will go ahead with its noble task.

R. K. Mission in Ceylon

The first general report of R. K. Mission's work in Ceylon is an interesting document. There are two monks at present working there, Swamis Vipulananda and Avinashananda. The Swamis' work have already exerted an appreciable influence on Ceylon. Swami Vipulananda, in addition to preaching the Message of the Order there, is devoting his special attention to educational works. Altogether 9 schools, Tamil, English-Tamil and High, are being conducted, in which, as the report shows, as many as 1,444 boys and girls were taught in March, 1927. There are three Ashramas of the Order in Ceylon, at Trincomali, Batticaloa and Jaffna. There is also a Students' Home at the last place. The work has begun very well indeed. We wish it greater and greater success every year.

Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur

The report for the year 1926 shows a membership of 564. The various works of the Society, religious, educational, etc. were continued with vigour. A weekly Gita class was held throughout the year, so also the ladies' weekly sitting. The Society conducted three free schools teaching 96 students, and 9 boys resided in the Society's Students' Home which is also an Orphanage. The number of resident workers in the Workers' Home was 16. Various philanthropic works were done during the year, nursing the sick, cremating the dead, help to the poor and the needy and especially the small-pox relief, during which the Society's workers nursed 325 patients of whom 270 were cured. Total income and expenditure during the year were Rs. 5,264-12 and Rs. 2,918-2-6 respectively. We wish the Society greater prosperity and usefulness.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य परान्निसोषत ।
Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THIRD LESSON

REALIZE the soul not as matter, but as it is. We are thinking of the soul as body, but we must separate it from the senses and thought. Then alone can we KNOW we are immortal. Change implies the duality of cause and effect and all that change must be mortal. This proves that the body cannot be immortal, nor can the mind, because both are constantly changing. Only the unchangeable can be immortal, because there is nothing to act upon it.

We do not become it, we *are* it, but we have to clear away the veil of ignorance that hides the truth from us. Body is objectified thought. The "sun" and "moon" currents bring energy to all parts of the body. The surplus energy is stored at certain points along the spinal column (plexuses), commonly known as nervous centres.

These currents are not to be found in dead bodies and can only be traced in a healthy organism.

The Yogi has this advantage that he can not only feel them, but to actually see them. They are luminous in life and so are the great nerve centres.

There is conscious and unconscious action. The Yogis possess a third kind, the superconscious, which in all countries and in all ages has been the source of all religious knowledge. The superconscious state makes no mistake, but it is not realisable on the normal plane. It has been called inspiration, but the Yogi says that this faculty is in every human being, and eventually all will enjoy it.

We must give a new direction to the sun and moon currents and open for them a new passage through the spinal chord. When we succeed in bringing the currents through the *Sushumna* up to the pineal-gland, we are for the time being entirely separated from the body.

The nervous center at the base of the spine near the "sacrum" is most important. It is the seat of the generative substance, of the sexual energies, and is symbolized by the Yogi as a triangle containing a tiny serpent coiled up in it. This sleeping serpent is called *Kundalini*, and to raise this *Kundalini* is the whole object of Raja Yoga.

The great sexual forces, raised above animal action and sent upward to the great dynamo of the human system, the brain, and there stored up, become *ojas*, or spiritual force. All good thought, all prayer resolves a part of that animal energy into *ojas* and helps to give us spiritual power. This *ojas* is the real man and in human beings alone is it possible for this storage of *ojas* to be accomplished. One in whom the whole animal sex force has been transformed into *ojas* is a God. He speaks with power and his words regenerate the world.

The Yogi pictures this serpent as slowly rising from stage to stage until the highest, the pineal-gland, is reached. No man or woman can be really spiritual until the sexual energy, the highest power possessed by man, has been converted into *ojas*.

No force can be created; it can only be directed. Therefore, we must learn to control the grand powers that we already have and through will-power make them spiritual instead of merely animal. Thus chastity is the corner stone of all morality and of all religion. In Raja Yoga especially, ABSOLUTE CHASTITY in thought, word and deed is a *sine qua non*. The same laws apply to the married and the celibate. If one wastes the most potent forces of one's being, one cannot become spiritual.

All history teaches us that the great seers of all ages were either monks and ascetics or those who had given up married life ; only the pure in life can see God.

Just before practising pranayama endeavour to visualize the triangle. Close your eyes and picture it vividly in your imagination. See it surrounded by flames with the serpent coiled in the middle. When you clearly see the Kundalini, place it in imagination at the base of the spine, and while restraining the breath in Kumbhaka, throw the breath forcibly down on the head of the serpent to awaken it. The more powerful the imagination, the more quickly will the real result be attained and the Kundalini awake. Until the Kundalini awakes, imagine that it does ; try to feel the currents and try to force them through the Sushumna. This will hasten their action.

THE SITUATION IN BENGAL

BY THE EDITOR

To one visiting after an absence of years, Bengal evinces signs of some remarkable changes in its outlook. These changes in their basic form may not be so apparent to the habitual residents of Bengal. But the visitor has the advantage of a sense of vivid contrast between his last memory and the present actuality. Bengal is seeking to come out of its accustomed grooves, nay, has already partly come out, and is reaching towards new spaces of freedom and realisation. The outline of a new national being is emerging clearer and clearer with here a line, there a dot, all apparently unconnected. The casual observer often finds them crude and ugly and meaningless. To the dreamer of creative dreams, however, they seem full of purpose and significance.

Bengal is just now faced with at least three facts which it is finding hard to cordially accommodate: (1) the so-called youth movement culminating at the present time in the revolt of students, (2) the sex-obsession of a section of Bengali writers, and (3) the freedom of women. (We leave the political and economic struggles out of our review, because, they do not seem to evince any interesting features.) These three facts face many of our countrymen like ugly spectres. Others are un-naturally enthusiastic over them. Are these to continue and grow? If so, in what form? What about our accustomed thoughts and ideals? What relation have they with these? Whatever may be the right answer to these questions, it surely cannot be a gesture of denial and condemnation of the new features. That way lies stultification and conflict. We must

be patient with these new growths and have an understanding sympathy for them and carefully guide them towards greater fruition by our loving encouragement.

We may state our attitude at the very outset. For two reasons, we are not at all pessimistic about them. Not that we endorse all their details. But we surely do not entirely condemn them. First of all, it is our firmest conviction that Bengal, and of course, India, is sure to rise to the very summit of spiritual, mental and material prosperity, such as has not been witnessed before, and that this upward climb has already begun. This is a postulate of our thought and activity. It may be hard to prove it, but we are content to accept it as proved. We can therefore look at every new development with composed feelings. Secondly, with such an outlook, it becomes easier for us to discover signs of hope even in the darkest hours of despair. We know, mountain-climbing is not a continuous ascent: there are hills and valleys. Through rise and fall, we proceed and progress all the time. Life's progress, individual or collective, is like mountain-climbing. Over hills and dales we go. And all the time we create and realise broader and nobler visions. What if there are ugly excesses now and then? Do we not know that the power behind is a beneficent one and is sure to eliminate all evil features gradually from its actions and expression? So we can be patient and sympathetic.

But our very sympathy entitles us to be critical. If we knew we were destructive, we would leave things to Nature and God. But criticism, when it is meant to help, does not hurt. Besides all growth is impersonal; persons are but instrument. Just as the spring season has made all our hills burst into a riot of verdure, even so the new energy evoked from the Heart of Things is making men manifest themselves in variegated forms. Our study should therefore be of active forces, not of persons. It is ideas and ideals that count, not the persons who represent them.

Now, when we study an epoch of history and take a bird's eye view of its rise and fall, we notice certain fundamental ideas and ideals working themselves out through the centuries of the epoch. They appear to thread all the vicissitudes of the age and lend meaning and fruitfulness to the passing events. These ideas and ideals are sometimes found to be represented and preached, at least in their fundamental forms, by certain individuals, at the beginning of the historical epoch. Or they may be only the unrealised dreams of the whole race or nation. As the realisation progresses, we find individuals or organisa-

tions rising up, claiming to be the mouthpiece of the Time spirit, wielding immense influence for a time, but finally yielding place to new claimants. Under these transient leaders, the work of new creation goes on. None of them are wholly right. Oftentimes, their emphasis is wrongly placed and their vision is from a wrong angle. But through all these twists and acute angles, we slowly reach the summit of achievement as along a zig-zag mountain pathway.

The three outstanding features of the current life in Bengal, which we have noted before, have to be understood, in our opinion, in the light of the above observations. They should not be considered to be final. They will undergo many changes, even perhaps beyond recognition. The present sponsors of the movements may claim finality. They may think they have found *the* thing and represent the ideal. But such egotism is a part of the plan of the Great Creatrix. This egotism makes us try our utmost to make the best contribution to the new creation. Without this, most of us will be despirited, unconvinced and unconvincing. Those of us who are hopeful may patiently wait for the next act to unfold manifesting fuller and greater understanding.

This fact does not, however, necessarily lead us to that specious philosophy of unlimited and planless progress, which is so much in vogue among a section of our people who ought to understand better, and which is now almost discredited in the West. There is no such thing as unlimited progress, nor can it be planless. There are periods of progress and then there is a dark age such as Count Keyserling is talking of as being again imminent in the West. Progress is bound by the limits of each age of prosperity ; and each such age is actuated and dominated by certain prominent ideals.

It so happens that almost each such historical epoch in India had not only its representative ideals but also its representative men. This is perhaps a remarkable and unique feature of Indian history. He, the representative man, stands at the head of the evolving epoch and the succeeding centuries with all their various struggles and achievements seem to be the unfolding and amplification of the purpose of his life. Details may vary, but the fundamentals are the same. Expression may be different, but the essence is the same.

Do we have any such representative man at the start of this new epoch of our history? We say emphatically, Yes. And that is Sri Ramakrishna. Perhaps all will not agree with us. We shall only remind them of what Swami Vivekananda

said on this point in his reply to the address of welcome that the citizens of Calcutta gave him on his first return from the West. But it does not matter whether the name of Sri Ramakrishna is forgotten. Sri Ramakrishna is great because of the great ideal that was a reality in him. It is this great ideal that matters. It is to this ideal that we would draw the attention of our countrymen at this juncture of our history. Yet, why do we mention his name? Because this name indicates the point at which the ideal, now scarcely realised and very vaguely imagined by many of our people, has been made to condense and take luminous form accessible even to the common understanding.

The ideal that is Sri Ramakrishna is nothing else than the eternal ideal of India made suitable to the needs and tendencies of the present age. This ideal is the harmony and union of the static and dynamic aspects of God, of the Transcendental and the Immanent, of Brahman and Shakti. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda did not emphasise merely the transcendental aspect of spiritual life, but also its dynamic, immanent aspect. The Reality is not merely beyond the world of relative life, but also within it. All life, in whatever form, is Divine. No honest activity of man is to be spurned. No manifestation of Shakti is insignificant. All is suffused with the loving radiance of God. This outlook at once releases us into illimitable freedom and makes all activity a pilgrimage to the Holy of Holies. Under the impetus of this ideal, the nation will burst into tremendous activity and fearlessly court unwonted experience, but will also soar gradually into the radiant empyrean of Divine Realisation.

The validity of the present state of things may be thus judged by a reference to the ideal we want to reach. We must not be too strict in our judgment. For we do not yet know,—no man can be audacious enough to prescribe to the Creative Energy,—what forms the evolving spirit will take. Many unthought-of expressions there will be, especially when we are convinced that the new ideal ensures utmost freedom to people to work out their destiny. But certain basic facts must in all cases be acknowledged. In our opinion, these are: Consciousness of one's spiritual nature, faith in and practice of chastity as a necessary means to the realisation of one's spirituality, and confidence in oneself as being endowed with infinite power, infinite knowledge and infinite joy. Those thoughts and actions which *fundamentally* militates against these basic facts can never be encouraged, and must in all cases

be shunned. Here again, we must be very cautious in our judgment. We must not forget that truths often work themselves out through their very contradiction. What sometimes may appear to militate against one fact may be a means to the realisation of another. Thus, to refer to the present conditions of Bengal, we are inclined to think that the excesses in certain spheres are really a crude expression of the sense of freedom gradually being acquired and tasted by the people. From the standpoint of the realisation of a higher freedom and greater responsibility, it is better there are such excesses *through freedom* than an artificial puritanism *through fear and compulsion*. Then again, we must remember that the higher ideals are realised through the negation of the lower ideals. That means that the lower ideals—the negation sometimes of the higher ideals—have to be realised first. There cannot be any *tyāga* (renunciation) without *bhoga* (enjoyment). So we must not condemn those who are busy realising the lower ideals.

From all these considerations it does not follow that we are to sit in idleness looking on the passing events in apathy. Nothing of the kind. For though we have the firmest faith in the approaching glory of our nation, we do not forget the fact the Nature does not grant anything except through the untiring activity of men. We have to be active. Nothing can happen of itself. *The best thing that we can do for the good of the nation is to try to live up to the highest ideals, without condemning those who are after lower ideals, showing, on the other hand, every sincere sympathy for their honest efforts.* There need not be mutual conflict or condemnation. This striving after the highest ideal has a tremendous significance even for those who are not so striving. We have observed before how through sectional movements the ultimate ideal is gradually realised. Even such gradual realisation depends a great deal on the presence of a body of men within the community, who are the actual and concrete presentation of the ideal. Their presence acts as a stimulant and a beacon; it energises and warns of dangers; it hastens the progress of the nation; it eliminates waste of time and power through haphazard experiments. Nothing is so important and valuable to a growing nation than the efforts of men who are seeking the highest. That is to say, we have to assert the positive ideal in every sphere without condemning the lower ideals. Always after the positive, and never the negative. To Bengal at the present time there is no duty more urgent than the silent realisation by a larger and larger number of people of the ideal

which is absolute freedom, which knows nothing but as the spirit, which looks upon all men as Divine personifications and which therefore considers their efforts as the very unfolding of the Divine purpose. This worshipful attitude towards others, combined with the radiant consciousness of the inherent Divine in oneself and everything else, has to be cultivated more and more. And this way lies the solution of all our problems, and not through condemnation.

Thus we do not see any use in uttering long and furious diatribes against young Bengali ladies dancing before the public. We do not say we support this practice. On the other hand we confess to a certain doubt about the correctness of it. But we refuse to take it at its face value. We feel at least the partial justification of the urge that a section of Bengali women are feeling to find wider and more joyful scope for their faculties. We also cannot ignore the fact that social life, to be made more cheerful, requires a much greater amount of aesthetic culture than at present. Besides, we must not forget that whether the practice is right or wrong, it will prevail more and more with the passing of days. So it would be futile to be furious against it. What we should do is to find a form in which the tendencies underlying the practice may have a nobler expression. Art when it is cultivated in the true spirit touches the footstool of God. Why cannot art in family and social life be so perfected that it will lose its vicious aspects and make life more joyful and shed over it the light of the Divine smile? We want those artists who can achieve this supreme task. *And they shall be not only artists but also saints with hearts filled with conscious presence of the Divine. They alone can give the sure turn and touch to the growing aesthetics of the nation. No crypto-sensualists will do.*

Take next the case of sex-obsession in the present Bengali literature. The fight that is going now over it appears sometimes amusing to us. The two parties seem to be arguing over a distinction without a difference. The fight is unreal. In essence both parties are guilty of the same offence which in one has taken a subtle form and in the other gross. But the attitude of both parties towards sexual life is well-nigh the same. We do not claim expert knowledge of literary art. But we can surely express our views as readers. The main tendencies of the present Bengali fictional literature have been, in our opinion, more or less against the cherished ideals of the people. Obscenity in Indian literature is not a new thing. The one great difference between the past and the present is that whereas

the ancient writers, while being frank, did not *idealise* sexual instincts, our present writers are building up a philosophy of life over them. And of this philosophising even the greatest of our writers are guilty. This philosophising is at the root of all the trouble. Men have sense-cravings. And it is nothing to be wondered at if these find occasional expression in art and literature. In fact it is often a question of convention. French and Italian literatures are more frank in these things than the English. It will be silly to argue from this that the French or the Italian mind is less refined or noble than the English. The north Indian literatures are similarly frank, not so the Dravidian languages. Yet who can deny that the joys of the senses and a discussion of them are gross and loathsome? So there must be a limit, we must not philosophise over and idealise the gross. Here again the need of a positive realisation of the higher ideals becomes urgent. We want a literature which will stimulate our higher faculties and record the realities of the superior world of art. Mutual bickerings will only lengthen the conflict. The growth of a superior literature will put a gradual end to the obnoxious undergrowths, or rather relegate them to their proper, dark, sphere where they will grow and flourish so long as men will have lower instincts.

Then again the question of the students' revolt. The immediate cause of the revolt of the students of some Bengal colleges need not be discussed here. We will content ourselves with indicating that the days are rapidly passing away when simply because there are certain rules, students should be made to obey them. The rules cannot be absolute. If the rules are found contrary to the growing ideal and are against the general well-being of the people, they *must* be changed. The question as to who will find out the nature of that ideal or that well-being is futile. Time will find out. We do not deny that students sometimes have gone to extremes. But for this, others than the students have also been responsible. We have not yet realised the wisdom of the constant emphasis on youth. Day after day, the youngmen of Bengal have been told that they are the only hope of the nation, that all greatness and all achievements of the nation depend on them. In short they have been made to feel that others than the young are of no worth and that it is they who will have to take up all responsibilities of the national work. Politicians also have found it necessary and advantageous to flatter the strength of the young. The ludicrous part of the procedure has been that often grey-

haired gentlemen have come forward as leaders of the youth movement, claiming that though their exterior may show signs of age, their heart is as green and young as any callow youth's. No doubt the underlying motive is all right. But the emphasis on youth has been too heavily laid. We consider it injurious to make any such distinction between youth and non-youth. Both are equally useful in the life of the nation. All that is required of the energy and enthusiasm of youth can be had without making this mischievous distinction. The consequence of this overstressed distinction is found in the regrettable happenings of the present day. But here again, we must remind ourselves that we must not judge the students' movement by its superficial aspects. The motive lies deeper. It is the tragedy of a transitional period that succeeding generations find little sympathy from their predecessors. The new ideal takes clearer and clearer form with the passing of generations. The preceding generations are always found poorer than their successors. This gives the youth an advantage. The older persons cannot provide the necessary inspiration to them. Therefore the actions of the young generation often appear as a revolt against the old. In this too, our only salvation lies in aspiring after and living the highest ideals. For by so doing, we will become objects of reverence even to the young who will find in us their dreams actualised, even though we were advanced in years. This is the only way to check the revolt of youth,—the practice of the highest ideals by a larger and larger number of people. We have already indicated the nature of that ideal.

In our opinion the danger to society or national life does not lie so much in the practice of the lower ideals as in the absence of higher ideals. When the lower ideals usurp the place of the higher, then there is real danger. There is no harm if women dance or youths become irreverent, or if some sensualists parade their low tastes in literature. But when people begin to think that they have reached the highest simply because they can dance and sing and write poems or sentimental stories, then the nation must beware. These may be good things; but we must never forget that they are far short of true manhood. The way to the realisation of true manhood lies through manly struggle, through acquisition of mental and moral power, through achievements in all fields of life, and not through dance and song. No mere artists can ever lead a nation and stand in the van of the advancing people; their place is behind the spiritual men and the men of noble action and

achievement. Is Bengal straying from the path of renunciation and the struggle for manhood? Let us then beware. But even then, the right procedure is not the condemnation of dance and song, but the making of manliness the leading virtue of the national life. That is to say, let manliness be cultivated more and more ; the so-called art will then automatically recede to its correct position and will be kept from developing ugly features.

As we study the conditions of our country and its many problems, we feel more and more strongly that the only sure and effective way of guiding the nation to its goal, minimising waste of energy and safeguarding the nation from a bankruptcy of ideals, is to assert the highest ideals of the nation in life and practice by a large number of people. They will create the atmosphere in which the ideal can flourish. In art, literature, society or religion, this *atmosphere* is a very potent thing. It is this that checks excesses and shames the unseemly to proper restraint. Devoid of that, a nation loses the saving sense of reverence. *Most of our sufferings are due to the lack of such ideal people.* Problems also rise out of this bankruptcy. Partly due to this bankruptcy and partly due to their own aggressiveness, the lesser ideals of the West have assumed tempting forms before our young people ; and they often rush after them in the levity of their newly realised freedom, bragging all the while of nationalism. From this aggressive "Occidentalism" also, the atmosphere created by a strong body of ideal people alone can save the rising generation.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

(Continued from the March issue)

My work at school did not allow me leisure enough to visit Mother as often as I liked. When I went to her after some days on the *Radhashtami* day which was a holiday for the school, I found her preparing to go for bath to the Ganges. I wanted to accompany her. But it was drizzling and I was not permitted.

Returning from the Ganges, Mother sat down on her cot and said to me : "Very well, I have also bathed in the Ganges," as if she had divined my unspoken desire to worship her sacred feet. I hastened to her with flowers, sandal paste

and other accessories of worship. Mother asked me not to offer *tulasi* leaves. . . .

After my worship was over, Mother sat down to partake of some refreshments. She made me sit down near her and gave me half of everything from her plate. As I partook of the *prasāda* from the *sāl* leaves, I was reminded of Nāg Mahāsaya* and told so to Mother. At that Mother said: "Oh how profound was his devotion! Can you ever conceive of any one eating these dry *sāl* leaves? But he did, simply because *prasāda* had been placed on them! How expressive of divine love were his eyes! They were ruddy and ever tearful, and the body was emaciated by rigorous *tapasyā*. When he would come to see me, he could scarcely climb the stairs, he would tremble so much under the stress of devotional emotions, and he could not control the movement of his legs. I have not yet seen the like of his devotion."

"I have read in the books," I said, "that when he gave up his medical profession and gave himself wholly to divine meditation, his father, being poor, was much annoyed, and remarked that Nag Mahasaya would henceforth have to go about nude and live on frogs. It so happened that a dead frog was then lying on the courtyard. Nag Mahasaya at once threw off his clothes and swallowed the frog. He then said to his father: 'I have done both your commands. Now please give up all thought of my maintenance and devote yourself to the thought of God.'"

Mother.—Ah, what devotion to his father! What same-sightedness to the pure and the impure!†

Myself.—Nag Mahasaya had once gone home from Calcutta on the occasion of a holy bathing festival in the Ganges, and was much rebuked for that by his father. As the auspicious hour arrived, a jet of water was seen to spring from a corner of his courtyard. Nag Mahasaya saluted the water as the Ganges and bathed in it, and many others of the village also came and bathed in the water.

Mother.—Yes, such miracles are quite possible to a devotion like his. I once presented him a cloth. He always kept it wrapped round his head. His wife is also very good and

* Durga Charan Nag, a prominent householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. He came from a village near Dacca, E. Bengal.

† This same-sightedness, when sincere, is considered a sure sign of high spiritual illumination.

devout. She came to see me the other summer. She is still living. . . .

In the noon, several lady devotees came and among them an old lady (who had seen Sri Ramakrishna) and her daughter-in-law. The old lady said: "If we had followed the teachings of the Master, we would not have suffered so much. We are ever after our worldly affairs and always thinking if we have done all our household works or not." To which Mother replied: "One must always work. It is by incessant work that the bonds of Karma are severed. Then comes non-attachment. One must not be without work even for an hour."

After mid-day meal, Mother lay down on her bed. All went away. Only myself and a widow, a contemporary of the Master, remained. I asked the widow: "Did you ever see the Master?" "Certainly I did," she told me. "He used to come to our house. Mother then used to live like a bride." "Please tell me about him," I said. "Not I," she replied, "ask Mother to tell you." But Mother was then lying with her eyes closed, and I did not dare to disturb her. But presently she said of herself: "Whoever will pray to him eagerly and sincerely, will have his vision. Only the other day, one of the boys* passed away. How good he was! Master used to visit their house. One day while returning in a tram car, he lost Rs. 200 from his pocket. This money had been deposited with him by a friend. He discovered the loss on returning home. He went to the bank of the Ganges and began to cry and pray to the Master. He was a poor man and had not wherewith to repay the money. As he sat crying and praying, he suddenly saw the Master standing before him and saying: 'Why are you crying? See over there under the brick near the Ganges.' He hurried to the place and actually found a bundle of notes under the brick. He came to Sarat (Swami Saradananda) and told him everything." . . .

(To be continued)

* Tej Chandra Mitra, an intimate householder disciple of the Master.

THE ARYANS AND THEIR GIFTS*

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

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We usually study the history of India as divided into water-tight compartments or periods. One great defect of this method of study is that we thereby lose sight of the life of the nation as a whole, we fail to realise that India has been the home of a living growing people, with a continuity running through all the ages,—each generation using, expanding or modifying what its long line of predecessors had left to it.

No careful student of our history can help being struck by one supreme characteristic of the Indian people. It is their vitality as a distinct type, with a distinct civilisation of their own and a mind as active after centuries of foreign rule as ever in the past. The Indian people to-day are no doubt a composite ethnical product ; but whatever their different constituent elements may have been in origin, they have all acquired a common Indian stamp, and have all been contributing to a common culture and building up a common type of traditions, thought and literature. Even Sir Herbert Risley, who is so sceptical about the Indians' claim to be considered as one people, has been forced to admit that "Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and religion, which strikes the observer in India, there can still be discerned a certain 'underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin.' There is in fact an Indian character, a general Indian personality, which we cannot resolve into its component elements." (People of India, 2nd Ed., p. 299).

This common Indian type has stood the test of time, it has outlived the shock of dynastic revolutions, foreign invasions, religious conflicts, and widespread natural disasters. Its best right to live is the vital power displayed by it through many thousand years of cataclysmic change in our land.

When we deeply ponder over the philosophy of Indian history, instead of confining our gaze to the usual text-book narratives of political change, when we survey the course of

* The first of a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

India's growth through the ages as a whole, we are bound to realise a wonderful rhythm running through all these epochs. We feel that we are to-day what our past has made us, and we see how that past has made us what we are. Each race or creed that has chosen India for its home, each dynasty that has enjoyed settled rule among us for some time, each school of thought that has dominated the human mind even in a single province of India,—has left its gifts which have worked in all the provinces and through many centuries, till they have lost their identity by being transformed and assimilated into the common store of India's legacy from the forgotten past,—just as millions and millions of small coral insects through countless ages have given up their bodies in building up the reefs on which many of the Pacific islands now stand secure from the rage of the fiercest tempest.

It is the duty of the historian not to let the past be forgotten. He must trace these gifts back to their sources, give them their due places in the time scheme, and show how they influenced or prepared the succeeding ages, and what portion of present-day Indian life and thought is the distinctive contribution of each race or creed that has lived in this land.

Such an analysis, in the present state of our knowledge, cannot be expected to be mathematically accurate or documented in every detail. It requires the highest historical imagination to reconstruct our past in this light, and, where imagination is the motive force, individual differences of opinion must occur. We cannot altogether eliminate the personal factor in such cases. But the attempt has to be made, if we are ever to rise above the level of our school text-books of Indian history. And, in spite of the risks attending a first attempt in a new field and the limited time at my disposal, I propose, in the present series of lectures, to treat of India's inner life and outer growth from the standpoint of evolutionary development through the ages.

In India, as in every other country of the world, the geographical factor has profoundly influenced history. India is a continent, rather than one country, in respect of the diversity of the physical conditions of its different provinces. Leaving the Himalayan slopes and secluded valleys out of our account, we have Hindustan proper or North India, forming one boundless plain with assured water-supply, which permits cavalry hordes to sweep from one end of it to the other in the dry season that begins in October. Hence, North India has been the seat of vast empires, each of which has, in its day, ruled

over many provinces, maintained rich and learned Courts, and added to the common culture of all India. The Madras coast or the Eastern Karnatak has the same features, though in a narrower area. But the Deccan proper, or the tableland of the south, is cut up by nature into small isolated districts, where racial and linguistic differences have been preserved through ages with very little change. And, hence, the history of the Deccan proper has been the rise of numberless petty kingdoms, their eternal contest with their neighbours, and downfall one after another. Unlike Hindustan, this region of the South has failed to exert any influence on the other parts of India, but has succumbed to Hindustan or the Karnatak whenever its geographical isolation has been broken by the aggression of some great empire of those parts.

IMMIGRATIONS INTO INDIA

The main stream of immigration into India has come through the the north-western passes. It is true that at the other extreme or the north-eastern frontier, we have some routes leading into India from Upper Burma and from Aracan. But the heavy rainfall of this region, exceeding a hundred inches in the year concentrated into four months, soon washes away the roads and promotes a dense growth of trees and underwood which closes the routes altogether in a few years. Moreover, Central Asia, the cradle land of mankind for many ages, is near our N. W. passes, while China,—another home of a teeming and overflowing population,—is cut off from the N. E. corner of Assam by almost insuperable natural obstacles. The few foreign strains that are known to have entered India through the north-eastern passes were small in numerical strength. They were: (i) a Tibetan dynasty that established a short-lived kingship in North Bengal in the 10th century;* (ii) the Ahoms who crossed the Patkoi range into the valley of the Brahmaputra early in the 13th century and fell completely under Hindu influence three centuries later; and (iii) the Burmese who invaded Assam in 1816, to be expelled by the English at the end of nine years. The Mongolian settlement in Eastern Bengal is now an entirely lost chapter of Indian history, but it must have been spread over several centuries and seems to have adopted the land and sea routes alike.

Not only have the north-western passes poured forth teeming thousands into India ever since the dawn of history, but

* Bangarh (Dinajpur) pillar inscription, 966 A. D.,—“*Kambojan-vayena gaudapatina.*”

our western sea-board has been equally hospitable to immigrants. Phœnicians of the Biblical times, then Arabs, then Greeks and Alexandrian Romans, Persians, Abyssinians and other foreigners have traded† with the western ports of India and made settlements on this coast. We know that Greek mercenary soldiers were engaged by some Hindu Kings in historic times, as French adventurers were employed by Sindhia and the Nizam in the eighteenth century.

At the end of the middle ages, our undefended western sea-board was penetrated by the Portuguese, and later by the Dutch, the English, and the French; but the foreign settlements on our west coast were of an even earlier origin, as the Portuguese on their arrival (1498) found the Arabs already settled at the ports of Malabar.

We know that the first body of Parsis migrated to the Bombay coast about 735 A.D. The Chitpavan and Nagar Brahmins are two other immigrant foreign clans, if their traditions and inscriptions can be relied upon to lift the veil from their racial origins. An analysis of the population of Gujrat shows many foreign races settled there but now completely Indianized. The Navaiyat Arabs and the Ben-i-Israel of Konkan are two other examples of this class, besides the Abyssinians of Janjira and the Nestorian Christians of Malabar.

COLONISATION BY INDIANS

But, on our East Coast, the ancient Indians were more enterprising and more skilled in navigation; they were colonisers, traders, givers of civilisation to foreign lands and not borrowers. In historic times the Chola fleet dominated the Bay of Bengal and Rajendra Chola I (*circa* 1026 A.D.) captured the capital of Pegu (Lower Burma) and annexed the Andaman and Nicobar islands. Indian emigrants—mostly from the Pallava country, with several also from the Gangetic valley in the north,—colonised Sumatra, Java, Bali, Borneo, Cambodia and Siam and gave a new religion, civilisation and art to the natives, though they did not establish political dominion there. The Indian mariners of the East Coast,—whether from Tamluk in Bengal or

† This trade pursued the route round Cape Comorin and up the East Coast to the mouths of the Kaveri and the Krishna. Huge hoards of gold coins of the early Roman Empire have been dug out at the old mouths of the rivers in this part of the Madras Presidency. (See *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, a Greek work written about 78 A.D.) The Arab settlement on our Malabar coast is described in the Arabic work, Zain-ud-din's *Tuhfat-ul-Muja-hiddin*, which has been translated into English (18 (?)) by Rowlandson and into Portuguese by Prof. David Lopes (*A Historia dos Portugueses no Malabar por Zinddim*.)

Masulipatam in Madras,—disputed the monopoly of the trade in the Bay of Bengal and the eastern seas with the Chinese sailors, as readers of *Travels* know.

INTERNAL UNIFYING INFLUENCES

Within the limits of India itself, province was isolated from province by differences of Government, language, climate and manners, by high hills, dense forests and deep rivers, and by the absence of roads and of easy means of conveyance. But from early Hindu times, this internal isolation was often broken and an All-Indian community of ideas, customs and culture was created by certain agencies. These were: (i) the pilgrim student, (ii) the soldier of fortune, (iii) the imperial conqueror, and (iv) the son-in-law imported from the centres of blue blood (such as Kanauj or Prayag for Brahmans and Mewar and Marwar in the case of Rajputs) for the purpose of hypergamy or raising the social status of a rich man settled among lower castes in a far-off province.

The great holy cities of the different provinces were regarded as sources of sanctity by all Indians alike. They were, besides, seats of the highest Sanskrit learning, or Universities of the type of the mediaeval University of Paris. Such were Benares and Nalanda, Mathura and Taxila, Ujjain and Prayag, Kanchi and Madura, and to a lesser extent Navadwip in Bengal. The sacred streams and temples of the north were looked up to with veneration and a life-long yearning to visit them, by the men of the south, and in the same way, Puri and Kanchi, Setubandh and Sringeri, Dwarka and Nasik were eagerly visited by devoted pilgrims from the north of India, in spite of the immense distances to be crossed. Furthermore, for the benefit of those who could not travel, some local rivers and cities of the south were named after those of the north and regarded as equally sanctifying. Thus, Madura is the southern Mathura, and the Godavari is the southern Ganges. Great Sanskrit scholars and saints, like Sankaracharya and Chaitanya, have passed from one end of Hindu India to another, conquering their rivals in disputation, as Samudragupta and other kings bent on *dig-vijay* did in arms. This presupposed cultural uniformity.

The Hindu pilgrims and wandering Brahmin students and saints formed a connecting link between the different provinces of India and they tended to leaven the mass of their stay-at-home countrymen with some amount of community of life and thought—though that amount was not comparable to the wholesale standardisation that is going on throughout India in these days

of the railway, the newspaper, the telegraph, all-India conferences for every imaginable and unimaginable purpose, and a common administrative system and cultural language.

Similarly, military adventures, especially of the Rajput stock, penetrated into the more backward and obscure provinces in search of a career which was denied to younger brothers in their overcrowded homeland. For example, Shivaji's ancestors are said to have migrated from Chitor; Yachappa Nair (the chieftain of Satgarh, 26 miles west of Vellore, who was killed in 1694), claimed descent from the Rathors of Kanauj; the State of Vizianagram was founded in the 16th century by a Rajput general of the Muslim Sultan of Golkonda.

The result of all these forces was that, in spite of political disunion, differences of language, tradition and custom, a uniform Sanskrit stamp was printed upon the literature and thought of all the provinces of this vast country. There was unity of religion, philosophy, literary ideas and convention, and outlook upon life, through Hindu India. If we take a broad and sweeping view, without being too particular, we may even go so far as to say that there has been achieved something of an approximation also in physical type and mode of life among the various races that have lived long enough in India, and fed on the same crops, drank of the same streams, basked under the same sun. Even the immigrant Indian Muslims have, in the course of centuries, received the imprint of this country and come to differ in many essential points from their brethren living in other parts of Asia.

FOUR GREAT LANDMARKS

When we make a broad survey of India's evolution through the last four thousand years, we cannot miss the four great landmarks that stand out prominent and clear in this expanse of time. Four distinct races or creeds have, each in its own age, determined this country's destiny. The Vedic Aryans, the Buddhists, the Mussalmans, and the British have each introduced a new element into India, each of them have conferred gifts which have worked through the succeeding ages and modified our life and thought, no less than our political history.

We start with the Aryans, not only because they were the first in point of time among the races whose records have been preserved, but chiefly because they have succeeded in impressing upon the other races of India the stamp of their religion, philosophy, vocabulary, literary form and tradition, administrative system,—in short, their ideas and culture. Tribes that cannot

truly claim to have a drop of Aryan blood in their veins have accepted the Aryan influence and tried desperately to give their ancestors an Aryan pedigree. Aryan culture, with the addition of some elements borrowed from the Dravidians, but transformed in its own way,—rules all India and gives to it an inner unity, in spite of the diversity created by our geography, ethnology and political history.

THE GIFTS OF THE ARYANS

What, then, are the elements with which the Aryans have enriched Indian life? The gifts of the Aryans are six, namely : (i) a lofty spirituality which has sublimated even the non-Aryan elements borrowed in the grand synthesis which is called Hinduism ; (ii) the spirit of systematising, or the methodical arrangement of every branch of thought ; (iii) ordered imagination in literary or artistic creation, as distinguished from extravagance, grotesqueness, or emotional abandon ; (iv) the grading of the people into mutually exclusive castes, based upon differences of function and of supposed ancestry ; (v) honour to woman, while rejecting feminist institutions like matriarchy and polyandry, which prevailed in the north and south of the Aryan wedge driven into “the middle kingdom” ; (vi) the institution of hermitages, which were distinct alike from the city universities and cloistered monasteries of Christian Europe.

ARYAN PENETRATION INTO N. W. INDIA

Let us try to visualise what followed the Aryan penetration into north-western India. It did not lead to an utter extermination of the original inhabitants of the country (as in Australia), nor to their wholesale confinement in isolated reservations (as in North America). It is now admitted by historians that the Anglo-Saxon invasion of England was not followed by a wholesale massacre or enslavement of the native Britons, but large numbers of the latter remained on their lands, though in a politically subordinate condition, and a quick and complete fusion of the two races took place, the composite product being dominated by the language and institutions of the conquering minority. This has also been the case with the European colonisation of Latin America. Similarly, the Vedic Aryans who conquered the Punjab formed an even smaller ratio to the non-Aryans already in possession of the soil than the Angles and Saxons did to the Britons. Most of the Aryan newcomers had to take non-Aryan wives, if they were to have any wives at all.

A grand compromise with the non-Aryan religions and customs was forced on the conquerors by the circumstances. Some non-Aryan gods and religious rites were accepted by them, but made purer and more philosophical. The old Vedic religion which was entirely ritualistic and the special possession of a particular race, now gave place to that all-embracing but undefinable system of toleration or synthesis which we call Hinduism, and which shelters within its catholic bosom every form of belief and practice that will agree to its few general conventions. The absorption of alien races and creeds into Hindu society has gone on in historic times and has failed only in the case of rigidly exclusive creeds like Islam and Christianity, as will be explained later in the course of these lectures.

The cult of the snake, once universal throughout India and now surviving among the aborigines and in the Dravidian south and the adoration of rude stones as manifestations of the deity,—either as the Shiva Linga or as the Shalagrama,—are clearly aboriginal faiths which the Aryans adopted with necessary modifications and made parts of the new common creed of the two races. The southern non-Aryan God Shiva,—the patron of the Ceylonese King Ravan—was declared to be another name of the Vedic Rudra, though the functions and attributes of the latter were quite different from Shiva's. But the coarser elements of the original Shiva worship were purged away from the composite faith. The Nagas took a subordinate place in the Hindu pantheon, as attendants on the gods or goodkings. The round pebble picked up from the bed of the Gandak river and adored by local tribes, now became an emblem of Vishnu the Preserver. The old popular creeds were thus spiritualised and the rude aboriginal gods were, by the invention of new legends and allegorical interpretations, invested with the halo of a loftier philosophy.

In the domain of thought, the Aryans created a far-reaching revolution by introducing system or methodical arrangement into everything that they handled. The Sutra literature is the best example of orderly arrangement in the various branches of human knowledge then in the possession of the Aryans. They wrote systematic treatises on medicine, philosophy, polity, grammar, law, domestic ritual and geometry. Panini's grammar is the most scientific treatment of the subject ever known.

In art, the Indo-Aryans had not the fertility of invention and exuberant imagination of the Dravidians; but what imagination they displayed was restrained and refined, though they did not approach the perfect order of form and chaste elegance

of beauty for which the Aryans of Greece still stand unrivalled among mankind. This point will become clear when we contrast the latest Vedic literature and the Sutras with the heterogeneous medley of fact and fiction created much later under local and preponderantly non-Aryan influence and designated as the Puranas in which we find imagination running riot.

THE HERMITAGES

But the most powerful and most beneficent factor of Aryan influence consisted in the hermitages of the Rishis, which grew up in what is popularly called the epic age, i.e., after the Aryans had advanced to the fertile Gangetic valley and established large and rich kingdoms, with crowded cities and magnificent courts, and peace and leisure for the population.

The hermits or *rishis* who lived in these forest homes (*tapovans*) were not lonely recluses or celibate anchorites cut off from the society of women and the family. They formed family groups, living with their wives and children, but not pursuing wealth or fame or material advancement like ordinary householders. All their attention was devoted to the practice of virtue and the cultivation of knowledge. Thus they lived in the world, but were not of it. They had frequent touch with the cities and the royal court by means of respectful invitations to the domestic ceremonies of the Kings and rich men, and the visits made by the latter to these hermitages in the spirit of pilgrimage. Their pupils included their own children and also boys from the busy world, who lived with the hermits, shared their toils, studied under them, and served them like their own sons. Then, when their education was completed, they would bow down to their guru, pay their thankoffering (*dakshina*), and come to the busy world to take their places among the men of action.

Thus, the ancient Hindu University, without being rigidly isolated, was kept at a safe distance from the noisy luxurious capitals and gave the purest form of physical, intellectual and moral culture possible in any age, if we leave out natural science and mechanics. Learning was developed by the rishis, who were maintained in learned leisure partly by their pupils' foraging in the ownerless woods and fields of that age and partly by the gifts of Kings and rich householders.

These hermitages were as effectual for the promotion of knowledge and the growth of serious literature as the cathedrals of mediaeval Europe, but without the unnatural monasticism of the latter.

Lecky remarks about the celibate clergy of the Catholic world: "The effect of the mortification of the domestic affections upon the general character was probably very pernicious. In protestant countries, where the marriage of the clergy is fully recognised, it has, indeed, been productive of the greatest and most unequivocal benefits. Nowhere does Christianity assume a more beneficial or a more winning form than in those gentle clerical households which stud our land, constituting, as Coleridge said, 'the one idyl of modern life,' the most perfect type of domestic peace, the centre of civilisation in the remotest village. . . . Among the Catholic priesthood, on the other hand, where the vow of celibacy is faithfully observed, a character of a different type is formed, which with very grave and deadly faults combines some of the noblest excellences to which humanity can attain." (History of European Morals, cabinet ed., ii. 137, 334-335). 'This evil was avoided in ancient India.

The Brahmins of old enjoyed popular veneration and social supremacy, but they used their influence and prestige solely for the promotion of learning and religion and not for enriching themselves or gratifying their passions. The nation as a whole benefited by this arrangement. But it was possible only in a purely Hindu State, without a dense population and with science and technical arts in a simple undeveloped condition.

In the calm of these sylvan retreats were developed our systems of philosophy, ethics, theology and even several branches of literature proper. Witness the vivid scene of the discussion of political science and morality in the Naimish forest as described in the Mahabharat.

Herein lay the true spring-head of the ancient civilisation of the Hindus, and this we owe entirely to the Indo-Aryans of the earliest or Brahmanic age.

A LETTER OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[In reply to his last letter (published last month), I wrote to M. Rolland partly as follows :

"I read with great interest your observations on the growth of the Vedantic ideas in the West. I bow to the beauty of your thesis. You will find that I also expressed a similar opinion in that letter. I mentioned therein '*Independent growth of Vedantic ideas owing to historical reasons*' as one of the causes of their propagation in the

West. I further said: 'I think, in the first stage, the industrial, social and cultural changes, especially the progress of science, drove the West to these ideas* and was *helped* therein by Indian culture as disseminated by Western Orientalists.' Far be it from me to maintain that the truths of the Spirit cannot reveal themselves independently and that they are in the custody of particular men or race of men. But you will, I dare say, agree with me that that does not prevent one race from helping another spiritually. If a people has cultured them specially, much more than other peoples, then, opportunity occurring, that people may certainly help the others. The West has specially cultivated the arts of Government, industrial development, etc. India or other Asian countries are behind it in these. And surely to-day we are being greatly influenced by Western ideas in these respects. I do not mean that we are not being influenced by the West in other respects also. I only mention the most outstanding of its influences. Similarly I think Indian spiritual ideas have *helped* the West. What was indistinct has been made distinct. Indigenous spiritual ideas of the West have been more *systematised* and clarified by the knowledge of Indian philosophy and religion. And in so far as this has been done, I maintain that our Mission has a share in it. I claim nothing more.

"I should mention, however, that the existence of Vedantic ideas in the West has been variously explained. There is a school of thought, which maintains that these ideas originally must have come out of India. This opinion still lacks *complete* historical proof. But some proofs there surely are. You say you find the Vedantic ideas existing in Christian mysticism, in Hellenic culture e.g., in Pythagoras and Plato, in Spinoza, etc. Christianity in its origin owed certainly much to Buddhism; and Buddhism is nothing but the Vedantic thoughts made popular. Pythagoras, it is generally admitted, has been to India and his teachings evidently owed much to Indian thought. Only the other year an English Professor of Sociology, Prof. Urwick, wrote a book, 'The Message of Plato,' in which he maintained the thesis that Plato borrowed his principal ideas from Vedanta. Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore, contributed some years ago a series of illuminating articles to the Bengali monthly, 'Prabasi', edited by Ramananda Chatterjee, pointing out the indebtedness of some of the early European thinkers to Indian philosophy. Spinoza, it is well-known, was well-versed in his ancestral teachings. And who knows how much of the mystical teachings of the Zohar was owing to Indian influence? It is recognised that Brahmins used to visit Athens. It is also historical that Alexandria became a centre of the mingling of Indian and Mediterranean cultures, and the Gnostic philosophy owed much to the Indian contribution. The fact is that in those ancient days when commerce was carried on mainly along land routes, the countries from China and India to Greece and Egypt were in much closer communication than we imagine now. The change of the commercial routes from land to sea meant not only great industrial, political

*That is to say, the West was compelled to evolve them.

and cultural revolutions in Asia and Europe, but also a death blow to the close relationship between Asia and Eastern and Southern Europe.

"My own position is that there must be more or less independent growth of Vedantic ideas among all cultured peoples. But I hold further that some peoples have, for many reasons, given more serious thought to their development and understanding than other peoples; and they have, whenever opportunity has come, inundated those other peoples with their developed spiritual thoughts. India is such a people.

"The above I have written only to clarify my position. As I read your letter between the lines I find that you also substantially agree with my conclusion. For you have said: 'The Eternal has sown himself with full hands over the whole field of humanity. The earth is not everywhere so fertile that the seeds may germinate. In some places it grows and produces fruits, in other places it sleeps.'

"Your remarks about music are quite true. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda also held the opinion that music is one of the ways to God-realisation. Both of them were good singers."

I also asked for M. Rolland's permission to publish his letters in our organs.

M. Rolland sent the following kind reply.—*Swami Ashokananda.*]

14th December, 1927.

Dear Swami Ashokananda,

I thank you for your kind letter of the 13th Nov. and for your generous gift of the volumes of the Swami Vivekananda's works which I have safely received.

If you think that the readers of your reviews and papers in India would have any interest in the letters which I have addressed to you as well as to Swami Shivananda and in general all the letters which I may send to any of the members of the Ramakrishna Mission on the subject of the great cause of which they are representatives, I give you permission (to publish them) most willingly. Your public is naturally religious and I should be happy to be put in touch with it through your publication.

I have read with great interest your reply to my former letter. We are in agreement about the fundamentals. The only difference between us (if it can be called one), is that you call that form of thought Vedantic which I think to have been in all times and in all countries, but which has found its most perfect realisation in Vedantic India. The full development is one thing, the origin is another thing. I do not think that in India or in any other country there has ever been the origin of a divine revelation. I give the honour for it to God which is in every living being. He alone is the source and that source

is in each of those living beings who have been, who are and who will be. All do not hear it sounding. But it is there in each one. And we do not know whether those of them who are silent themselves or make themselves silent, are not filled with His marvellous music. For God is in the silence, just as much as in the most forceful expression. In face of the Eternal there can be no question of priority ; there is no commencement and there is no end. But I do not hesitate to recognise in India the most powerful, perfect and complete monument of the Divine Thought,—the Cathedral of Unity and of Identity—the Himalaya of Being.

I think that my intended work will be delayed a little longer than I wished ; at first because of the quantity of the materials which have not yet been classified (your volumes have yet to be added to them) ; afterwards because I am not yet altogether free from other works which I am finishing at this time. It is necessary for me also very often to reply to the appeals against iniquities and crimes which do not cease happening in one place or another in this world devoured by violent passions ; and I cannot strip myself of this duty which most thinking men, wrapped up in their work, close their ears to, so as not to be disturbed. . . .

Please accept my brotherly greetings.

Yours devotedly,
ROMAIN ROLLAND.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—II

By SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Uplift of the masses is surely the principal object. We have noted already that this object can be attained only if the classes feel their duty and responsibility towards the masses and come down to serve them. Thousands of workers are required for the task ; therefore, the first thing necessary is to raise workers and equip them properly for the task. This is why Swamiji, in one of his Madras lectures, emphasised the necessity of starting teacher-training institutions which would turn out teachers for carrying the right type of education to the masses.

In view of the immensity of the task Sister Nivedita suggested that we should organise an army of education ; just as in most Western countries every young man after completing his education has to give at least three years to military service, so in this country the youths should be required after their education is over, to serve at least for three years for mass education. This suggestion points out clearly the immensity of the task before us and also shows how instead of wasting our energy in stray efforts for mass education we should first of all try to inspire and equip the enlightened youths of this country for the service of the people and thus proceed to make an organised and determined effort for raising the masses.

Surely this has to be done and this should receive our primary attention ; we need steady work for sometime to come to fire the imagination of our educated youths, make them conscious of their duty to poor and ignorant villagers and to rouse their enthusiasm for putting in their quota for the sacred task of mass education.

Even this work is not an easy affair. Our enlightened youths cannot be easily led to feel and work for the people. The very education they receive in schools and colleges makes them grow for a considerable period of their lives in educational hot-houses, entirely cut off from the rest of the society.

Sir Brajendra Nath Seal pointed at this defect of the present system of education in course of his address before the Bombay University and suggested that some sort of practical work for the amelioration of the wretched conditions of neighbouring slums should be incorporated in the University curricula of our country. This is undoubtedly a wise suggestion, but this is far less than what is required for improving this heartless system in order to prepare the individual for the uplift of his country.

The glaring omissions in the present system of education noted in the previous article show clearly how our young men are becoming unfit not only for improving their environment, but even for any effective life-work on productive lines. Their standard of life is raised, ambition is pitched high, but, for most of them efficiency of earning is not proportionately developed. Struggles for their own lives naturally become very keen and they cannot possibly spare any attention for other people. Moreover, lack of systematic culture of the heart makes it impossible for most of them even to feel any inclination for serving the masses. What is more dangerous,

they become affected by a snobbishness that makes village-life and association with poor people repulsive to their taste.

The present system therefore needs thorough overhauling ; at least the important omissions mentioned in the previous article have to be made up ; due attention has to be paid to physical culture, practical aptitude, economic efficiency, cultural integrity and training of the will and emotions before one may dream of raising an army of mass education as suggested by Sister Nivedita.

Let us therefore consider how much we may possibly contribute towards improving the present system of education. With our present resources we cannot start and conduct independent Universities for introducing any healthier system of education. Neither are we in a position to make any direct effort towards reforming the present system by convincing the educational authorities of the necessity of such reform. We can however profitably utilise our strength and resources at the present moment by rearing up *different types of educational institutions* which by turning out a healthier stuff may be expected to act as a moral correctiv on the educational authorities of the land and also to serve as models, like our Sevashramas and relief-operations, to various social service organisations. These institutions may moreover hope to turn out at least some men who will not mind retiring to villages with unostentatious vocations of teaching in High Schools or farming or running home-industries. These men can be expected to be of immense help for the spread of education among the masses. They may with the help of local boys and youths conduct during leisure hours night-schools, gymnasiums and libraries, deliver lantern lectures, set up museums and demonstration farms and organise exhibitions and healthy competitions. One such man can moreover guide, control and inspire the teachers of a number of elementary schools in the locality. Their activities for mass education will also serve as examples and inspire others to work on the line in neighbouring villages.

So we see that our educational institutions, if properly reared up, will serve three useful objects, namely—

- (1) They will exert a moral influence on the existing stereotyped institutions ;
- (2) They will serve as models to be copied and improved by different social service organisations in the land ;

- (3) They will turn out at least some men who may start and carry on model educational works for the masses.

In addition to all these they may also aspire to turn out at least a few who will gladly throw selfoverboard and devote themselves wholeheartedly to the sacred task of uplifting the masses and thus they may serve the purpose of teacher-training institutions as conceived by Swamiji.

We are glad that by the grace of God already a number of different types of educational institutions have started growing under the auspices of our Mission. *Our obvious duty at present is to see that each of them grows into a model of its type and advances steadily towards fulfilling the objects stated above.* Every one of them must aim primarily at making up the deficiencies of the present system mentioned in the first article. We should not on any account waste our energy after maintaining even a single institution run on stereotyped lines. If we spend our energy after any institution we should leave no stone unturned to make it essentially man-making.

While building up model types for improving the education of the classes we should remember that our first business is to supplement the glaring omissions. It is obvious that for imparting physical, practical, cultural and even economic education to a certain extent, separate schools or colleges are not absolutely necessary. A supplementary education provided by the following two types of institutions can go a long way to correct the evils of the present system.

Institutions for

- (1) Leisure-hour training (of the Y. M. C. A. type).
- (2) Home training—in hostel for college youths or boarding-house for school boys (Students' Home type).

TYPE NO. I.—LEISURE HOUR TRAINING

The feature of the first of these types is that it requires an irreducible minimum of men and resources, yet it may contribute a good deal towards making up for the deficiencies of the present system. Boys and youths residing in their own homes and getting academic education from local schools and colleges may resort during leisure-hours and holidays to a neighbouring Ashram where specific arrangements are made for physical and cultural training. Such an Ashram needs set up a gymnasium, organise from time to time sports and

athletic feat competitions, and make provisions for regular drill for the development of physical efficiency of the pupil-members. It should also have a library and arrange regular discourses and do all that is possible for the training of the will and emotions as mentioned in the previous article.

Such an institution may also utilise the advantages of the Boy-Scout movement by getting up an affiliated corps with its pupil-members. Boys and youths have a gang-spirit and this spirit may be utilised fully by directing it into useful channels through the Scout-system for the development of their physical efficiency as well as character-building. This system will surely prove a splendid agency for making the members strong, energetic, resourceful, enterprising, willing, efficient and thoroughly disciplined servants of society. Several attractive devices in the shape of uniforms, badges, signs, whistles, signals, games and excursions make the training immensely interesting. The whole thing has been converted into a highly amusing sport and thus the training based on the principle of self-activity is bound to be effective to a degree. Introduction of national games and discourses on Indian culture as well as association with the monks at the Ashram will more than compensate any denationalising influence that is ascribed by some to Scout-training. All considerations against affiliation are outweighed moreover by certain facilities (for imposing this semi-military discipline) afforded by a formal connection with the Boy-Scout Organisation.

Our Patna Ashram has been developing this type of educational institution for leisure-hour training; our Sarisha Ashram is also doing some work on the line and it is interesting to note that the latter has obtained very good results by introducing the Scout-method.

This kind of educational work may be undertaken by all our existing Maths and Ashrams, specially in cities, towns and big villages with high schools, wherever of course men and money required for the purpose may be spared. This will cost much less than a school and will certainly prove more useful than an ordinary school.

In this connection we mention that according to the capacity of each Ashram the programme for leisure-hour training may be limited to one or two items. An Ashram providing simply a gymnasium and encouraging physical culture of the neighbouring youths and boys will be doing no mean service to society. An Ashram concentrating solely on providing facilities for study of scriptures during leisure-hours, will

certainly exert a cultural influence and thus have an educational value of a high order ; our Gadadhar Ashram (Bhowanipore, Calcutta) is an instance to the point in so far as it is trying to perfect this particular type by making arrangements for a thoroughly academic study of our scriptures through a Veda-Vidyalyaya organised under its auspices.

An Ashram, which cannot make any permanent arrangement for even one item of the leisure-hour training programme, may however do some appreciable work on the line simply if it encourages physical, cultural and even economic training of neighbouring boys and youths by organising competitions and awarding prizes.

These Ashrams should of course strive to provide more and more for an all-round supplementary leisure-hour training.

The less is the cost of maintaining an institution, the greater is its chance for spreading over the country under the patronage of different social service institutions and the more therefore is its possibility in increasing the magnitude of our educational influence over the present system. Judged from this point of view this simple type of leisure-hour institution has a considerable utility and it should be given as much attention as is possible for us.

TYPE NO. 2.—HOSTELS FOR YOUTHS

The next type, namely, *hostel for youths*, costs a little more of energy and resources than the previous one, but it can provide for a more improved quality of supplementary training. Run on the lines of Brahmacharya Ashram under the care and guidance of our monks, it should have congenial environment, which is undoubtedly the first thing necessary for a healthy growth of the pupils. Here provision should be made to make up for all the glaring omissions of the present system mentioned in the first article by a systematic home-training, leaving academic education to the care of existing colleges.

This type, if properly worked, is cheap and yet highly effective, so far as rounding off the defective education received from schools and colleges and turning out a considerably healthier stuff from our student population, is concerned. For youths going up for higher education this type of institution can be expected to do all that is necessary for their physical culture, moral and cultural development and even for economic equipment by providing training in farming and home-industries, banking and commerce.

We should observe that the Y. M. C. A. and other Christian Missionary Organisations have considered it an effective device for spreading their culture among the youths of this country. Undoubtedly the youths are the future hopes of the country ; and it is during their college life that they receive the greatest amount of thought-influence that goes to mould their future career. Their education as we have observed, does not help them to develop their physique, expand their heart, train their will and equip themselves properly for the hard struggles of life as well as for the uplift of the environment. Moreover it is precisely during this period that the environment of colleges and hostels and the exigencies of city or town life subject them most to the pernicious influence of modern civilisation based on selfishness and sense-enjoyment. If in the course of the four or six years they spend for college-education they can come in touch with 'life-giving and character-building' influence and adjust their lives accordingly, the problem of regeneration of this country will surely become easy for solution. There is no denying that on the youths the whole future of the country depends and so the greatest service to the country at the present moment is to equip the youths properly for discharging their duties to the motherland. For this, they have to be tended very carefully, the cultural poison they have to swallow during this period and the negative education they receive have to be counteracted by a decidedly healthy environmental influence and a well-balanced supplementary training. For serving this purpose the Students' Home type of institution is an excellent device.

**TYPE 2A.—HOSTEL FOR YOUTHS WITH LEISURE HOUR TRAINING
ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTSIDERS**

The combination of such a Home with arrangements for leisure hour training (Type I.) for outsiders may prove a highly useful educational agency specially in district and sub-divisional towns. A full-fledged institution of this type, costing as it does, much less men, money and worry than a college or even a school has every chance of being copied by others wherever there is a population of college-going youths. Thus this type of institution has immense possibilities for extending our educational influence over the present system. It is interesting to note that a Home for college students has already been started at Rajshahi and another at Bankura by enthusiastic groups of local people in co-operation with monks belonging

to other orders, and that efforts are being made at some other places to bring institutions of this type into existence.

TYPE 2B.—BOARDING HOUSE FOR BOYS

Hostels run on similar lines for school-boys will no doubt be more effective than mere leisure-hour training under the first type of educational institution. But they cannot be expected to have as much educational value as hostels for youths. Adults have a power of resistance, physical as well as mental, more developed than boys. This is why they may be exposed to uncongenial environments and allowed to fight with them ; all that they require are inspiration and proper guidance which may be had from a hostel run on the lines of type 2A., whereas childhood and even adolescence require much more attention. Like tender plants they have to be hedged in as it were and protected from uncongenial surroundings both physical and mental. This is the period when the body grows very rapidly, so they have to be given special facilities in the shape of proper food, air and physical exercise. A congested city like Calcutta, for instance, with its polluted air, adulterated food and little scope for outdoor exercise, is not at all a fit place for accommodating such a vast school-going population. A hostel here for school-boys will not obviously help them much, at least so far as their physical growth is concerned. Then the heavy syllabus, unnatural method of teaching without any reference to their psychological requirements and the coercive discipline that our boys have to encounter in most of the ordinary schools, together with the contaminating influence of led-astray fellow-pupils are surely too much for young minds to be counteracted merely by a supplementary training in hostels. The pressure of the present system of school-education tends to stunt their intellectual as well as moral growth, and these little ones have not the strength to withstand it even if they receive inspiration and guidance through the hostel. Of course boys during the period of adolescence may be benefitted to a certain extent by such hostels because their resisting power is more developed than that of little children. *So we may conduct hostels for school-boys above twelve and find them, of course, more effective than mere leisure-hour training, but we cannot expect very much from these institutions.*

(To be continued)

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE "VOICE OF FREEDOM" MAGAZINE

One of the members of the monastery, Joseph Horvath, a Hungarian by birth, was a practical printer and this gave Swami Trigunatita the idea of starting a printing office in the Temple basement. A complete printing outfit was secured and Mr. Horvath gave up his regular outside position to take charge of the printing shop, giving his time as a freewill offering.

The Society used quite a little printing at this time for various forms and for advertising the lectures. With this as a foundation, Swami Trigunatita made plans for the publishing of a number of the Sunday lectures and other books. At the same time it was decided to issue a monthly magazine as a channel through which to reach many souls who either did not attend the lectures or who were too far away to come to them. A number of names were suggested for the magazine, but the one finally adopted was the "Voice of Freedom." The first number was issued in April, 1909, and the last number was that of March, 1916.

The magazine ever and always held constant to the high ideals of the truths of the Vedanta philosophy and the high standards and variety of material published soon attracted a wide circle of readers. After three years the "Voice of Freedom" was an established success with a growing list of interested friends and subscribers. By special arrangement with M., the author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Swami published an American edition of the *Gospel* in the printing shop and had under way the publication of a number of other works when Mr. Horvath left in 1914 to visit his parents in Hungary and no one could be found with the necessary experience to take his place. A member of the Vedanta Society, Mr. C. H. French, already had a printing plant of his own, so Swami disposed of the Temple plant to him on the condition that he would print the "Voice of Freedom" magazine as payment, which he continued to do faithfully until the magazine was discontinued in March, 1916.

THE TEMPLE NUNNERY

A number of the women disciples were very desirous of entering into the seclusion and discipline of a separate community under the personal spiritual instruction of Swami, and at their request he consented to establish a nunnery. A house was rented a short distance from the temple, the rooms of which were plainly furnished by the women inmates. Swami drew up a set of rules similar to those of the monastery, pertaining to eating, hours of rising and general spiritual conduct.

The women disciples were full of earnest zeal and lived the life most sincerely, under the inspiration of Swami's teaching and guidance. They did all their own cooking and household work in the spirit of worship and service to humanity and faithfully adhered to the rules laid down. These women were all self-supporting, working in the daytime and then doing their duties in the nunnery early and late. Yet they rejoiced and were happy in their life, in that they were working out their salvation to the ultimate goal of realization and freedom. Swami's hope was that the nunnery might be the seed of an awakening spiritual life among the women of America and that great results might accrue from its apparently small beginning. Due to a number of causes, however, the nunnery came to an end in 1912.

THE SHANTI ASHRAMA

While Swami Vivekananda was in America and holding classes and delivering lectures, one of his disciples, Miss Minnie C. Boock, offered as a gift for the work a tract of land of 160 acres lying in the San Antone Valley, eighteen miles south-east of Mt. Hamilton, California, the site of the world-famed Lick Observatory. Swamiji accepted the offer in the name of the Ramakrishna Mission of Belur Math, the property to be held in trust as a peace retreat where souls seeking rest from the clamor of the world, could go for spiritual rejuvenation, thus blessing the gracious donor to all eternity.

Situated at the head of the picturesque San Antone Valley, sparsely wooded with oaks and chapparal, with ranges of bushcovered hills on either side and the perpetually snowy high Sierra Nevada Mountains in the far distance, removed from crowds and cities, the "Shanti Ashrama," as named by Swami Turiyananda, was an ideal spot for spiritual culture on

the one hand and its pure bracing air a tonic for health, on the other.

Swamiji left America for India in 1900 and 'was never able to visit the Ashrama in person, but in his acceptance of the land he opened the way for the development of its spiritual mission.

Swami Turiyananda who arrived in San Francisco, July 26, 1900, was the founder of the Shanti Ashrama and as stated above gave it its name. On the 3rd of August 1900, Swami Turiyananda left for the Ashrama accompanied by twelve or more students, who took with them tents and other necessities for living in the open. Established in the tents as a base, the men of the party started to build some shelter of a more permanent character. Getting materials for building was a task of great difficulty, as the way there was through pioneer country, with wagon trails for roads, and the nearest source of supply was San Jose, California, 40 miles away over the mountains. But their heart was in the work and they persevered until they had erected a kitchen and screened dining room, a log cabin, several outhouses, three canvas-walled cabins and also a small meditation chapel which stands to this day. One of the springs on the ground was deepened, rock-lined with cement and the water carried in empty kerosene cans to the house as needed.

Swami Turiyananda virtually made the Ashrama his headquarters and spent months at a time there holding classes and dealing out salvation to those souls who came to renew their spiritual life in the blessing of his presence. Always chanting the name of the Mother, he filled the whole Ashrama with spiritual vibrations, until every leaf, every rock, every blade of grass became saturated with the spirit of holiness emanating from his divine consciousness.

After the departure of Swami Turiyananda for India, in June, 1902, one of his devoted disciples named Gurudas, was left in charge of the Ashrama. This was a happy choice, for Gurudas who is now the Swami Atulananda, was beloved by all for his gentleness of spirit and his steadfast devotion to the truth.

On January 2, 1903, one year after Swami Turiyananda's final farewell to America, Swami Trigunatita arrived in San Francisco and at once recognized the important part the Shanti Ashrama would play in the work. In the following November a group of students were gathered together by Swami and after the necessary arrangements for food and

other supplies were completed, the little party left for the Shanti Ashrama by way of San Jose. The party stopped over in San Jose that night and the next morning departed early in two large wagons belonging to Mr. Paul Gerber, a neighbor five miles distant from the Ashrama, who had carried the students there previously. Mr. Gerber and his family had learned to love Swami Turiyananda as they later did Swami Trigunatita and had many friends among the students. They constantly performed many little acts of kindness for the students and the Ashrama.

The road led for 22 miles from the city of San Jose to the top of Mt. Hamilton, where the Lick Observatory commands a view for many miles around. As the road wound upward, there unfolded before the travelers the vista of the beautiful Santa Clara Valley with its wonderful orchards and vineyards, while on the far side of the valley the Coast Range lifted itself into the air, standing as a guardian to protect the fruits and crops from the strong ocean breezes. Two miles from the summit they halted for the midday meal, after which they continued their journey until the Observatory reservation was reached. The Observatory proper contains the Lick telescope, known as one of the largest telescopes in the world, and grouped about it are a number of buildings for scientific purposes, together with the homes of the various workers in the different departments, many of whom later became Swami Trigunatita's personal friends.

As they left the Observatory the travellers found plenty of thrills in places where the mountain sides sloped sheer down from the road along the top of the ridge and in the indescribable panoramas of wooded hills, rugged canyons, and the far off suowy Sierra Nevada mountains, which unfolded before their delighted vision at every turn of the road as they wound their way down the seven mile grade to the Ysavel Valley through which the road led to the Shanti Ashrama. The road for a greater part of the way was rough, as it followed the bed of a wide creek in the bottom of the valley, but improved as it climbed into the foothills.

As the wagons descended the last range of hills into the San Antone Valley, only five miles away from the Ashrama, the thrill of expectation among those who were to see the holy spot for the first time became intense. It was toward evening when those in the first wagon reached the gate at the edge of the Ashrama property and saw in the distance through the trees the tents and huts in which they were to dwell for

the month to come. In a few minutes more the little party had arrived at the main building where Gurudas (Swami Atulananda) was waiting to welcome them. As they were shown to their quarters they were surprised and grateful, after their forty mile ride, to find the tents and cabins in perfect order, water for drinking and washing and places neatly contrived where they could arrange their belongings. Later they gathered in the dining room to partake of a hot and bountiful meal prepared by Gurudas.

The second day was given up to rest and general arrangements. Swami's orderly mind had long recognized that in classes organized for the study of Yoga practices, the average students would progress more rapidly and the work of the class be advanced by regularity of activities and a certain amount of discipline. On the third day therefore, he promulgated the following schedule.

3-45 A.M. Students were awakened by the melodious sound of chanting by Gurudas who went from cabin to cabin chanting "Om".

4-5 A.M. Students were to rise and meditate on bed.

5-8 A.M. Personal preparations and participation in the duties of the day. The work incidental to the presence of the class in the Ashrama was divided according to the individual capacity. The women were assigned the cooking and the men carried the water from the well, chopped the wood for fuel and did various other works for the upkeep of the place.

8-9 A.M. Breakfast.

9-10 A.M. Personal time and rest.

10-11 A.M. Meditation of entire class in the meditation chapel or cabin as it was called.

11-12 A.M. Morning class conducted by Swami with reading from Yoga Vasistha.

12-2 P.M. Recess.

2-3 P.M. Meditation class.

3-4 P.M. Recess.

4-5 P.M. Dinner at which Swami read from the Gita with comments.

5-7 P.M. Various works and recess.

7-8 P.M. Meditation in meditation chapel.

8-9 P.M. Evening class conducted by Swami with reading from *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* or commentary on the *Song of the Sannyasin*.

10 P.M. Lights out.

Beginning with the fourth day Swami went into three days' retirement during which time he fasted, meditated and counted his beads. Although his lionlike figure could be seen now and then amongst the trees as he paced about the Ashrama, none of the students were permitted to approach or address him. He did not allow his retirement however to interfere with the conduct of the classes or the lessons at the table.

Every meal was a feast of spiritual instruction always beginning with the Sanscrit chant "Om Brahmârpanam" etc. and closing with other Sanscrit chants, for, as Swami said, eating should be done spiritually and mentally as well as physically, and for that reason he always regarded it as one of the most important functions of the spiritual life. On one occasion, after the evening meal had been served and before the exposition of the Bhagavad Gita had begun, the hum of conversation rose above all other sounds. Swami waited a few minutes but the conversation did not subside, so he asked for attention and said: "The animals eat in gratitude for the satisfaction of their hunger, but we are not even eating on the level of the animals. Repeat the name of the Lord while you eat so that He, the source of all good, may not be forgotten." To help them practice this principle, Swami devoted the meal times to chanting, instruction and spiritual reading and ate his own meals apart from the class.

One day was set apart as a day of individual solitude and fasting, as a voluntary asceticism. All who participated retired to their cabins where they could spend the entire twenty-four hours in meditation or other spiritual practices. They were not to sleep or lie down but to spend the entire time as desired by Swami, who always tempered all things to the physical and mental capacity of the individual. To some, in that holy place, there came revelations and experiences in the twenty-four hours, which silenced doubts, satisfied anxious longings and gave new impetus to their spiritual aspirations.

Swami always provided plenty of relaxation. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons were declared holidays and a stream of genuine fun and merriment relieved any strain that might have resulted from a too steady serious diet. Swami was the leader in the fun. He also was constantly solicitous about the physical and mental well-being of all. No one during all the years the classes visited the Ashrama under Swami, was allowed to indulge in any extremes of asceticism without his knowledge or consent.

On the night of the full moon, Swami held a Dhuni (fire)

ceremony and all who were able to do so sat around the fire, meditating and listening to Swami's discourses and chanting. Filled with instruction and experiences the month passed quickly away and notwithstanding the cold weather prevailing, for many of the students, this month at the Ashrama was one of spiritual blessing and benefit and they reluctantly departed for their homes and work.

ETIQUETTE, EASTERN AND WESTERN

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

I

When a people are about to group themselves into large and complex units, instead of small and simple, it is as necessary to them to have a well-defined etiquette of mutual intercourse, as to have a *lingua franca*. In Hindu India, where the civic life is to-day emerging from the more rudimentary organisation of the family and the caste, the civic ideal of mutual courtesy and of personal bearing has also to supersede the domestic. For instance, there may be good private reasons for going unbathed and in soiled raiment, till ten o'clock in the morning, but the moment we recognise those outside our own four walls, with a feeling of high-bred respect, we shall feel the necessity also, of remaining hidden from them, until all our personal appointments have been perfectly made. This consideration will eventually eliminate the period of unkemptness, which may be regarded as a public advertisement of the fact that we are not mixing with people whom we honour, or in society that we consider good. This is really what it means, though perhaps, when the habit is tracked down to its source and stated in words, it bears a very ugly look. A man who does not belong to good society, is a man whom others will not care to know. Yet whose fault is it if we infer this, when he himself announces it by his personal appearance as his own opinion? Instinctively, we try to look well, in entering a presence that we honour. Afterwards a time may come, when we consider an air of cleanliness and refinement as *due to ourselves*. When this feeling arrives, we take pains with our own grooming, out of sheer self-respect—*noblesse oblige*. But this is at bottom, a reflection from an exalted and ennobled social consciousness. We see ourselves as honourable persons because we move in a society of the honourable. Under all the complexities of etiquette, there

lies this fact, our estimate of the greatness and importance of those about us. And exactly as we hold ourselves to them, shall we see ourselves mirrored in their consciousness. There is no such thing socially as a Gulliver amongst Lilliputians. The man who feels himself that, very quickly becomes degraded and belittled, in his exalted solitude. There is nothing so vulgar as social exultation, or snobbishness. It is the man who has infinite belief in the nobility of his fellows who feels himself also to be most truly noble. Petty vanity of birth or family may impress our fellow-villagers, but the more we dwell on it, the less fit are we for any larger society. In the great world, it is assumed that every man, would he speak of it, has an equal treasure to display. He who troubled to open that pack to public admiration would be shunned henceforth, as a rustic and a bore. Even the greatest of personages, as the badges of rank go, must sedulously avoid all 'swagger' about his own importance, or he will be laughed at, behind his back. We respect those about us, and we respect ourselves, as members of so fine a company. This is the attitude of which high courtesy is born.

The Mohammedans, owing to their fundamental inter-tribal organisation, are very rich in the conceptions characteristic of this kind of social decorum. The patriarch—or father-king—never forgets that the stranger, stopping a moment to chat at his tent-door, may, in his own home, be another patriarch, and he offers him the attentions due to that rank. But it is amongst the Mongolian races that etiquette has been developed to its highest intensity. Every Bhutia boy about Darjeeling receives a more or less laboured initiation into this culture of his race. And it is this factor, more than any other, that makes the Mongolian nations pre-eminent in Asia, in their power to deal with foreign nations. The rules of etiquette are like lines laid down for the wheels of intercourse to run along. By guarding both parties against trivial friction, they enable social relationships to be developed to a height and stability otherwise impossible. Anyone who has lived much with foreigners, knows, wherever he be, that it is small differences about eating, about bathing, about greetings and the common exchange of consideration, that make such combinations difficult, far more than the weightier matters of character and personality. And it will generally happen—supposing the social rank to be fairly equal—that the man of one race or nation will be defective, in comparison with the other. Peoples are by no means on a level, in their recognition of this form of sensitiveness. Where there

is a substantial equality of mutual consideration, mere differences of form will rarely be torturing and it is pretty certain that in proportion to the development of etiquette will be the national capacity for international activity.

There are really two elements in good manners. One is personal refinement, as seen in habits, and in the intimacies of the home-circle. And the other is formality as regards those whom we meet. The exquisite refinement and delicacy which result from good Hindu breeding are undoubtedly the factor that tends to compensate for deficiencies in life's little formalities, and make these less noticeable than they would otherwise be. This same refinement probably also creates a sensitiveness that makes the conduct of others a matter of keen pain and criticism, instead of serene indifference. As regards self-development, doubtless the Hindu emphasis is most desirable ; as regards civic and national possibilities, the cultivation of the social attitude is slightly more important. Individuals of genius, however, are apt to sing true, so to speak, in these things, even without any special training, because their emotions are so fine, and their intuitions so exquisite, that they leap spontaneously on every occasion, to the expression of some feeling that those looking on recognise as beautiful and adequate, however unexpected. A Ram Mohun Roy, or a Vivekananda, creates systems of etiquette for himself. Even if they did not, moreover, the world might well overlook the fact, and strive to hold communication with spirits so rare, through any barrier, however thick. But the case is very different with us ordinary folk. And most of us are quite ordinary. A whole nation cannot expect to be composed of men of genius. If we are to have the opportunity of giving and taking as much as is possible, in modern intercourse, we must first give serious consideration to the toll that the world demands of us, in the recognition of what is due to others. The more weight and power our personality carries with it, the more necessary this is, for the more pain we can inflict, in default of pleasure.

Nothing is so despicable as an imitator of foreign manners. No one dislikes these more than the foreigner whose individuality is stolen from him ! To speak the international language of a common etiquette, is not the same thing as to walk about in borrowed clothes, with a borrowed bearing, and a carefully-calculated way of telling a story, correct even to the giving of a slight laugh at the end of it. Self-consciousness is writ more plainly on every word and act of some, than on any player even seen upon the stage. Indeed the actor ought to apprehend his

part and forget himself in its interpretation, but here we have an actor whose one care is himself! The result cannot but be a vulgarity, as irritating as it is pitiful.

No, the international language of good manners implies a consciousness of certain common ideals of courtesy, and a clear intention, in one way or another, to give expression to this good feeling. The language itself matters very little. Who cares whether a man folds his own hands, or clasps yours, in friendly greeting, so long as salutations are exchanged? Who minds whether a friend's sympathy is shown by words or by silence, so long as, in one way or the other, it is conveyed? The slipping into, or away from, a social circle, without demonstration, may be felt by the host as a positive expression of respect to some matter that is under discussion, or some person who is being entertained. And yet a careless entrance, and bursting into talk without formal greeting, might appear as an offence in itself. Vastly more important is the feeling indicated, than the method of expression. But the necessity of doing reverence, silently or otherwise, to the circle one is entering or leaving, is probably recognised explicitly by every civilisation in the world.

II

The Greeks dreaded any tampering with their native styles of music, for it had been noticed, they said, that no nation had ever changed its musical system, without presently losing its whole political integrity and independence. Similarly it often seems as if a point of etiquette carried so much with it that it must be embedded in the national character, like garnets in lava, not to be changed without destruction. For instance, it appears a simple matter on the face of it, whether we sit on the floor, or at a table, while we eat. The glistening floor, the freshly-washed leaves, the piled rice, and the gentle mother, with all her tender forethought as to the likes and dislikes of this one and that, moving from place to place, giving food with her own hands—what a picture! How holy to every Hindu heart! And in the West, similarly, the common board, with its loaf, its butter, and its milk; the mother at one end, the father at the other, and the children seated between them, in a bright, hungry circle, right and left. "God bless the master of this house," sing the carollers at Christmas, "God bless the mistress too; and all the little children, that round the table go." In the East, the dining-floor, and in the West, the table; each in its own place, forms the symbol of family love and unity. Each

brings to mind the common life in which we were knit together as one.

And yet the difference is not nearly so simple as it seems. The Eastern child *receives* its food—the Western *takes*. The Eastern has a training, from the first, in submission, in cheerful acceptance and resignation. The Western is equally set to learn how to *choose*. In the East, the mother alone bears the burden of the common need. In the West, each one is more or less responsible for all the rest. One must offer food to others, first, and only when they are provided, take for oneself. Yet one must not exaggerate this attention, teasing those to right and left by inopportune cares on their behalf ; but must wait for suitable moments, when conversation flags, or a need is felt. For it is real consideration for others, and not merely the formalities of a seeming considerateness, in which the child is to be trained.

It is a similar feeling for the comfort of those about one that determines Western rigidity about the manner of eating, itself. The man who opens his mouth during mastication, or makes a noise that can be heard, or drinks, while the mouth is full, causes unspeakable distress to those who sit at the same board. This was not felt, when the group took the form of an open semi-circle. But the instant it is unified and concentrated by the table, each man's physical habits become the concern of all his fellows. The mouth must never open, while there is food in it. And yet a man must not eat mincingly either, like some prim school-girl ! This would be effeminate. There must not be a sound heard, that could be avoided. The munching of toast or the crunching of apples, if not perfectly soundless, should at least be kept as imperceptible as possible, and should never be revolting. And any sound of drinking, or the sight of one taking water into the mouth while it is full, should be rigorously tabooed. All this is to avoid revolting the senses of those about us.

Infinitely less imperative are the rules about the management of knives and forks, fish-bones, fruit-stones, and so on. By one mode or another, to avoid causing annoyance to others, is the one aim in all these matters. One tries to make and keep all connected with the meal, in as great order as may be. Even the plate should be left neat, and food should not be conspicuously wasted. But the fact that in one country a knife and fork are held in one way, and elsewhere in another, is not difficult for anyone to realise, nor could it possibly be fatal as might these other points, to a good understanding.

Another point that is of importance, in the Western etiquette of the table, is the bearing of those who sit at it. Here there is probably little difference between East and West, at heart ! We show respect to our elders by an upright demeanour before them, disrespect and low breeding by lounging or slouching. This is the case at all times ; but a hundredfold more so, in sitting at the table. Here, it is an offence to put hands or elbows forward. One must hold oneself straight on one's chair. Ease must be sacrificed to propriety. Respect for others forbids any thought of personal comfort. And this respect must culminate in one's attitude to the hostess, the mother of the family, or the lady of the house.

In the West, just as in the East, the mother puts herself last. She gives food to all others first, and only when each has been served, she helps herself, and begins to eat. Quietly and unobtrusively, she thinks of the comfort and happiness of every guest, and, as if she did it for her own enjoyment, devotes herself to the least attractive, who is apt to be neglected. But there is this difference between East and West. In the West, there is a part laid out for the hostess to fill, in which the guest has the reciprocal duty of putting her first. It is with her first, and only afterwards or in a secondary sense with one's fellow-guests, that one shakes hands, on entering and departing. Persons of high breeding always single out their hostess for these attentions first and foremost. She stands aside, in a doorway, for the guest to pass before her, and the guest's highest duty is immediate obedience. She lends her attention to such conversation as she can forward, whether she is really enjoying it or not. Or she uses her authority to secure private opportunities for such visitors as have something of importance to discuss *tête-à-tête*. She is the universal confidante, the kindly providence. It is true that in going in to dinner she reserves to herself the most important of the men-guests, while her husband takes in the principal woman. But this is an exercise of responsibility, the conferring of an honour. It is not to be understood as taking the best for herself. Infinite tact, unflinching sweetness, and a silent and hidden unselfishness are demanded of the hostess in Europe or America, as surely as of the mother, in India.

On the other hand, when she stands, no man must remain seated. Even when, at the end of dinner, with a look at the chief woman-guest, she rises and leads the way to the drawing-room, for the cosy moments of chat together, even then, all the men stand, and one or other goes to the door to open it, while

she stands there, and waits for her guests to pass through it. Only when the women have left the room, may the men fall into attitudes of ease, over their dessert. In all this, we see the expression, in a different form, of ideas and feelings that are common to India and to France. The etiquette of Europe may be more stately, but that of India demands to the full as much refinement of the heart. On the other hand, it is probably necessary that our boys should learn always, in Western society, to treat woman as queen, rather than as mother, while it is for her, the queen, to treat them, if she will, as if they were her sons.

In the West, the civic ideal dominates even the home. The words "She is my Mother! Why should I be polite?" are incomprehensible to the European mind. What? it replies. Do you desire to be *rude* to your mother? On the other hand, there is a sweetness in the East, and a closeness of intimacy, to which the West never attains. To this sweetness and closeness, words of formality seem a rupture. They hurt the souls that are at one, as if they made a distance between them. Between ideals so different, and both so true, who could be wise enough to choose? Perhaps our highest opportunity lies in apprehending both, and in passing from one to the other, without consciousness or thought.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Vireswarananda's Tour

In course of his South Indian tour, an account of which we published last March, Swami Vireswarananda, President of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama, reached Mangalore by the second week of March, after visiting the city of Madras and several other towns of the Tamil districts on his way. His programme at Mangalore was a busy one. He stayed there a fortnight during which he delivered three lectures at the local Dramatic Society and Canara High School on "What is Religion," "Art and Religion" and "Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda." He also unveiled the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda in the Hall of the Kanara High School. His speeches and conversations were highly appreciated by the people.

From Mangalore, the Swami went to Mercara towards the end of March, being invited to attend the celebration of the anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday. There also he held religious discourses and gave two lectures on "The Necessity of Religion" and "The Religion of the Gita," to the great joy and edification of the audience.

The Swami returned to Calcutta after visiting several other places on his way. His tour has been eminently successful and has spread the teachings of Vedanta broadcast in many places of the South.

Vedanta Work in America

We reproduce extracts from a letter written to one of our Swamis from America and we hope these will interest our readers. The correspondent writes :

Of all the greetings and gifts we received during the holiday season your letter was one of the most precious to us. It brought so keenly to our minds again some of the blessed times we spent in your presence. Particularly do we remember your talk on Shiva, which made us love Him, and we think that perhaps in some ways we specially belong to Him, as He loves so much those people who are often misunderstood by the world. And Divine Mother, too, we learned to love through you and the Vedanta books we have read. But above all our greatest devotion is awakened by the idea of the Supreme Parabrahman. We are grateful to you for making these abstract ideas so real to us, but more than all we thank you for something you conveyed and inspired in us which cannot be expressed in words. . . .

Your account of the worship of Divine Mother in Benares interested us very much. Had we been there we feel we could have entered into the spirit of it with you. You see, dear Swami, you have led us to love the Divine Mother through your enchanting talks about Her.

Regarding the work here, probably you know Swami Bodhananda has two Swamis assisting him, Swami Gnaneshwarananda, direct from India, and Swami Akhilananda, from Boston or Los Angeles. The latter recently visited Boston for a short time and since his return Swami Bodhananda has gone there for about ten days. He is expected back this week. There are now three services on Sunday, morning, afternoon and evening, and in addition to Tuesday and Thursday meetings a Sanskrit class is held on Friday evenings. We are unable to attend all the classes, as after we return from business we find it necessary to remain home some evenings for rest, but almost every evening we read Vedanta before retiring.

There are in America at present quite a number of teachers from the Orient, some calling themselves Super-Yogis or something of that nature. No doubt they are doing some good, but we do not feel they present the loftiest message of Vedanta. . . .

So far as we know, the work in Philadelphia has not yet been reopened. Some months ago Swami Bodhananda spoke of opening a class in Brooklyn, but apparently it has not been possible as yet. We wish it would materialize as it would be more convenient for the Brooklyn members and we possibly could bring people who do not care to go over to New York in the evening after a hard business day.

Out West Swami Paramananda is making great headway. In addition to the Ashrama at La Crescenta they now have a reading room at Pasadena and Los Angeles, where classes are also held. Another centre

has been established in St. Louis by the Swami at Portland, and a new Swami from India has been sent for to assist him.

We repeat our heartfelt thanks for all the help you have given us, and we pray that much blessing may come to you in your beloved India. It must be wonderful to be in Sri Ramakrishna's land, and we rejoice that you "meet almost daily" and "have long talks" with "one who knew him intimately."

R. K. Mission Sevashram, Kankhal

The report for the year 1926 shows that altogether 19,685 persons were treated in the Sevashram of whom 668 were indoor patients. Besides this medical work there is also a night school and a library in the Ashram for the benefit of the local depressed classes children and of the general public respectively. The Sevashram purchased a new plot of land during the year, on which it hopes to build Workers' Quarters, Rest House, Guest House, Night School, etc. It requires at least Rs. 25,000 for the above purposes. The Indoor Hospital accommodates 66 patients. A permanent fund of Rs. 1,98,000 is required for its upkeep. A further fund of Rs. 40,000 is required for the upkeep of the Ayurvedic Department. Besides these, other funds also are urgently needed for the general maintenance of the Sevashram, Library, Allopathic Department, etc. We earnestly hope the public will respond to these urgent needs. Contributions may be sent to *Swami Kalyananda, Hony. Secy., R. K. Mission Sevashram, Kankhal P.O., Saharanpur Dt., U. P.*

The late Swami Purnananda

It is with a heavy heart that we have to announce the passing away of Swami Purnananda at the Udbodhan office, Calcutta on the 13th April last.

The Swami was connected with the Prabuddha Bharata for several years and afterwards served the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in various capacities. For sometime he was president of the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta. He was a charming conversationalist and his conversations always derived an added interest from his sparkling, good humour.

Lately he lived a retired life and his quiet nature was extremely striking. For the last few years he could be seen days in days out seated in a cell-like room in the Udbodhan office, with all interests of the outer world as if lost to him. For sometime past he was suffering from dropsy to which he succumbed. His *tittksha* in this illness evoked admiration even from medical men. May his soul find its consummation.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राच्य बरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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RAJA YOGA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FOURTH LESSON

Before we can control the mind we must know it.

We have to seize this unstable mind and restrain it from its wanderings and fix it on one idea. This must be done over and over again. By the power of will we must get hold of the mind and make it stop and reflect upon the glory of God.

The easiest way to get hold of the mind is to sit quiet and let it drift where it will for a while. Hold fast to the idea, "I am the witness, watching my mind drifting. The mind is not I." Then watch it thinking, as if it were a thing entirely apart from yourself. Identify yourself with God, never with matter or with the mind.

Picture the mind as a calm lake stretched before you and the thoughts that come and go as bubbles rising and breaking on its surface. Make no effort to control the thoughts, but watch them and follow them in imagination as they float away. This will gradually lessen the "circles". The mind ranges over wide circles of thought and those circles widen and outline ever increasing circles, as in a pond when we throw a

stone into it. We want to reverse the process. Starting with a huge circle we want to make it narrower until at last we can fix the mind on one point and make it stay there. Hold to the idea, "I am not the mind, I see that my mind is thinking and I am watching my mind act." Thus you will gradually feel less and less identified with the mind until at last you can entirely separate yourself from the mind and actually know it to be apart from yourself.

When this is done, the mind is your servant to be controlled as you will. The first stage of being a Yogi is to go beyond the senses. When the mind is conquered, you have reached the highest stage.

Live alone as much as possible. The seat should be of comfortable height ; put first a grass mat, then a skin (fur), next a silken cover. It is better the seat has no back and it must stand firm.

We have to exclude all thought from the mind and make it a blank ; as fast as a thought comes we have to banish it ; to be able to accomplish this, we must transcend matter and go beyond our body. The whole life of man is really an effort to do this.

Thought being a picture, we do not create it. Each sound has its own meaning. They are interrelated in our nature.

The highest ideal of man is God. Meditate on him. We cannot know the Knower, but we are he.

To see evil is to create it. What we are we see outside, for the world is our mirror. This little body is a little mirror we have created, but the whole universe is our body. We must think this all the time, then we shall know that we cannot die or hurt another because he is our own self. We are birthless and deathless and we ought only to love.

"This whole universe is my body ; all health, all happiness is mine, because all is in the universe." Say, "I am the universe." We finally learn that all action is from us to the mirror.

Although we appear as little waves, the whole sea is at our back and we are one with it. No wave can exist of itself.

Imagination properly employed is our greatest friend ; it goes beyond reason and is the only light that takes us everywhere.

Inspiration is from within and we have to inspire ourselves by our own higher faculties.

THE SYNTHETIC VISION

BY THE EDITOR

It must be admitted that the Indian leaders of thought and action present an aggregate of interesting outlooks. The problems they are seeking to solve include all conceivable forms, from the purely domestic to the extremely metaphysical ; and the solutions they propose are also equally variegated in form. Some profess frankly materialistic views. Some look at the world (and also perhaps God) from the economic point of view. Some are trying to resolve the difficulties of mankind by an interchange of ideas. Others find the panacea in art. Others again in religion. Just as their problems are various,—domestic, social, industrial, political, literary, æsthetic, national, international, philosophical, spiritual, etc., so their solutions are also equally various,—materialistic, intellectual, æsthetical, philosophical, spiritual, etc. This divergence of interests and views is not at all to be regretted. It is, on the other hand, a happy sign of mental vigour and insight. There is also a peculiarity. It will be noted that India's solicitude for the unification of the East and the West is unparalleled by any other country in the world. This union of the East and the West is no mere academical question with India. For one thing, India has to bear the brunt of the impact of Western civilisation. For another thing, India is temperamentally metaphysical. To us all problems have a metaphysical import. We cannot understand or solve them except through their relations with our inner being and philosophy of life. Now this divergence of view-points would not matter, if we recognise a gradation of values among them. For there is a gradation of values in the objective world which it would be futile to deny. Should we not recognise the same scale of values in the understanding and solution of our problems also? Is not the religious, then, the ultimate view-point?

India thus has a peculiar (that is to say, apparently so, and to others) way of solving her problems. It is, as is generally said, through religion. What is exactly meant by that? Religion is the attuning of the entire man to the entire universe of reality. When we speak of religion as solving a problem, we mean that we must take the problem in its most fundamental sense. For good or for evil,—but we think, for

good, infinite good—the long course of her history has taught India at least this lesson that the ultimate and the only true value of man is spiritual. Man's true and eternal satisfaction lies in realising himself as pure spirit. It is futile to undo the effect of this lesson on the Indian mind. For it is not a pose, learnt through long repetition. It is spontaneous in its origin and confirmed by the experiences of millenniums.

This spiritual view-point does not necessarily condemn other view-points. But the materialism, intellectualism, æstheticism, etc., of all peoples are not alike. Great difference is made by the basis *samskāras* of a people. What is claimed is that the revival of material and intellectual prosperity in India has always been an effect of a deeper spiritual revival, and that the present age should not forget this essential relation in its struggle after secular achievements. It is sad to remark, however, that many Indian thinkers and workers are reluctant to recognise this allegiance to the spiritual ideal; and this reluctance is undoubtedly having a mischievous effect on the national mind.

There cannot be a more urgent task in India at the present time than the production of a large number of men and women who will represent the highest synthesis in their outlook and experience of life and reality. And at the very outset, we must recognise that the motive power of those lives can only be a spiritual realisation which is, subjectively, the revealer of the Highest Spiritual Truth, and objectively, in its national and international bearing, the type and essence of the widest and most comprehensive synthesis of life and thought. Spiritual realisation is essentially subjective. Every one has to work one's way up by oneself. It is a transformation of one's inner being. From this it follows that if we are to solve a national and international problem through spirituality, *what is primarily required is the discovery of an attitude towards life and the world, which will also be a new way to the realisation of the Divine.* To solve collective problems through spirituality means nothing else than that.—We have to discover a new means of God-realisation, which will be, subjectively, a spiritual *sadhana*, and objectively, a world-outlook such as is required to synthesise the evolving age. If the world is to be united mentally and spiritually, we have to conceive an outlook to which such unity is real. That outlook must be at the same time a sure means of God-realisation. All unity is a state of consciousness.

This peculiarity of the Indian way of solving collective

problems should be carefully noted. A man is apt to conceive two views of life for himself, individual and collective. As a result, there is often a conflict between the two. The duties that we owe to our country often antagonise and seem superfluous to the duties that we owe to our inner being,—to moral and spiritual ideals. Of course, we can silence the still small voice within, but not without spiritual suicide ; and that is possible only when we are completely shut off from the higher life. India is always conscious of this probable conflict of duties and inclinations, which in her case is bound to be acute, wedded as she is to the highest spiritual ideal. The conflict may arise partly from the imperfections and moral defects of the collective ideal, and partly from want of a necessary readjustment of the methods of individual spiritual self-realisation. Therefore there is a need of harmony between individual and collective outlooks. This necessarily cannot be a quick process. It is a slow, almost unconscious development and takes time to fully manifest itself. To those who do not understand the spiritual implications of the conflict of individual and collective ideals, such a process of solving national problems appears lethargic and meaningless. The method of India's evolution is often misunderstood by them. The truth, however, is that India always tries to find such solutions for her collective problems as are in harmony with the individual spiritual ideals, so that the aforesaid conflict may be avoided. She has always proposed such solutions of her collective problems as are also new spiritual outlooks and sadhanas for individuals. Each age has thus a new spiritual outlook and a new spiritual sadhana.

In the present age also, therefore, what is ultimately and essentially required is the discovery of a new spiritual outlook and sadhana. Have they been discovered already, or are they yet to be found? We unhesitatingly reply that they have been already placed before India by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda through their lives and teachings. The new spiritual ideal which is to fulfil, individually, the highest conception of spirituality and life, and collectively, the widest synthesis of realities and aspirations, is the Transcendent-Immanent Spirit, which, transcendental in its ultimate nature, is yet manifest in all the realities of the universe, which is conceived and realised in various different forms and aspects by men according to their will and temperament, which has not only many supernatural manifestations, but is also manifested as men and the world. This synthetic view of reality offers a new outlook to the human mind. According to it,

everything concerning man, material, intellectual or spiritual, is the unfolding of Divinity itself. Nothing is secular any more. All is spiritual. This is what Sri Ramakrishna taught by the doctrine of *Dharma-samanvaya*—the harmony of religions. He realised Reality in all its varied aspects and thus arrived at the highest synthetic ideal in which the entire universe, natural and supernatural, was comprehended. When man glimpses this synthetic ideal, his attitude towards all things becomes sacred and worshipful. His life becomes a consuming fire of love and service. Ever established in this high spiritual consciousness, his body, mind and soul are for ever dedicated to the service of man who is God. His whole life becomes a *līlā*, a supernal play with the Divine.

It must be clearly pointed out here that the realisation of this grand harmony is not a question of intellectual assent only. Mere intellectual apprehension is little better than talk. It is a hollow, unsubstantial attitude towards life. Better far to be sectarian and fanatical, if we *practise* the sectarian ideal. Nowadays such talkative liberals are found everywhere. They talk high philosophy and seem to appreciate the highest synthetic ideal; and they think that by giving up sectarian practices, they are doing better than their fathers through mere profession of liberal ideals. Nothing can be more pernicious than this. No doubt intellectual liberalism has its value. It no doubt eliminates schisms from the collective life and helps the growth of sane thinking. But what is dangerous in this intellectualism is that it is apt to reduce humanity to the low level of empty talk. A spiritual ideal,—and all ultimate ideals are spiritual,—unless it is *practised* and *realised* carefully, is nothing. Liberalism, true liberalism, is a state of consciousness which can be realised only after hard spiritual sadhana. It is ridiculous to talk of universal outlook without tremendous sadhana at the background. These fine talkers are apt to reduce noble ideals to mere poses and drive practical spirituality away from life. The ideals therefore should be practised and realised. *That is to say we must realise that state of consciousness in which the desired synthesis is a reality.*

There is a striking difference between what an Indian's general outlook was in the past and what it is at the present time. There is in every age a general level along which the mass mind moves. Any one aspiring higher has to start from there. In the past the common man's outlook was essentially domestic and social. His world consisted of the concerns of his family and society. His vision scarcely penetrated beyond

these limitations. Such a man, therefore, when he wanted to transpose himself to a higher level of vision, had to spiritualise his domestic and social relations ; that is to say, he had to conceive his domestic and social life from a spiritual viewpoint. Of course he had his economic life also. That also was extremely limited, within the bounds of his village or district markets. It was not nation-wide. (We do not forget here the foreign trade or the cultural and spiritual missions of India. People connected with these were certainly much more than parochial in outlook. But here we are speaking of the majority, of the general outlook.) This domestic or parochial outlook, if we may call it so, has, in the present age, completely given way to a world-sense. The political and industrial changes that the contact of the nations of the world has brought about in Indian life, are revolutionary. First of all, the old idea of the king looking after the state and the people going about their private duties, no longer holds good. Now every man and woman has to think not only of himself and herself, but also of the good of the state, and has to share its responsibilities. Secondly, there is the change in the economic life of the country. Now even the most obscure village is an integral part of a world-wide economic system. No man therefore can shut his vision within the boundaries of his village market. He must march abreast of other nations, with fully developed world-sense, or lose himself. Thirdly, both these have rendered social changes inevitable. Our conception of society has to change. The old values have to be thoroughly revised. This is further necessitated by the cultural contacts that have resulted from the coming together of the world's nations. Various cultures have come forward with their various views of life and reality ; and having once known them we can no longer remain limited within our own ;—we must also assimilate these cultures. There is thus a sense of world-unity growing in the mass mind and constantly agitating and impelling it forward.

It is this synthetic consciousness which is increasingly characterising the rising generations. And we have to lead the growing minds from a low conception of world-unity to the spiritual conception of it. Fortunately, this is no difficult task for India. There is of course the danger of vulgarising the new ideal. We have already remarked on the modern tendency of indulging in hollow intellectualism in the name of world-outlook. We may also be tempted to conceive it from a mere economic or political viewpoint. We may reduce it to a superficial cosmopolitanism. Or we may seek to base it on an

æsthetic understanding. We admit these have their value and contribute to a certain extent to the grand synthesis we are aiming at. But we repeat that without a spiritual basis, they will be lifeless and weak and will easily crumble down. The deviation from the spiritual conception of world-unity is bound to be self-destructive. The young generations have to be specially careful. The picture of Western nations realising so-called world-unity on secular basis is being alluringly held before them. This is pathetic self-delusion. One must not forget that the Western nations, by having secularised their national and international outlook, have also limited the range of human aspirations. To them man is primarily a physical and intellectual being. But is man really that? Are body and mind really the essential parts of man? Where is the place of him as pure spirit in the secular conception of world-unity? It is no credit to Western nations that they have placidly ignored the spiritual values in their conception of life's synthesis.

It cannot be forgotten that even when the Western nations have sought to approximate to a high synthetic ideal in their civilisation, they have succeeded in adapting themselves more or less to a conventional pattern, the inner life being practically starved to death. Their world-synthesis is only a skeleton, not a living organism. Often the Western pattern of humanism and world-citizenship has been presented to us as a fulfilment of our 'defective' civilisation. But even if it be so, the secret of making it real and living does not lie with the West. It is with us, and it is spiritual self-realisation. Without spiritual vision, humanism or world-citizenship is a dangerous thing. It sprawls over the world, destroying everything in its overweening confidence. It does not soothe and nourish.

Let us not talk of science, art, social service, etc. as being spirituality. These are all right and have their legitimate place in the life of man. But spirituality, true spirituality, is a thing apart. All these may be made the means of reaching the higher level of spirituality, but they are not themselves spirituality. India is never weary of warning us against this confusion. No, true religion is concerned with God alone. Religion is the realisation of the Infinite, Undifferentiated Consciousness, where there is neither men nor the world. Anything short of that is not real religion. No God percolating through layers of mind and matter, however subtle and refined they may be, can satisfy the spiritual hunger of man. The true goal of spiritual efforts should never be lost sight of. Does the West give any real place to this conception of life? This highest value of life must

have an honourable place in any sound scheme of world-unity. It is by going beyond the world and its concerns, into the heart of the Transcendental, that we derive the power of perceiving true world-unity, and not by entangling ourselves in the meshes of phenomena, however bright and vari-coloured they may be. It is India's special concern to conceive and realise real world-unity. For India has the vision and necessary impetus in her soul, and God willing, she will yet fulfil the world's greatest dream.

We have often spoken of spiritualisation as the fundamental motive of Indian culture and civilisation. Coming to details we find that in every age spiritualisation has at least four aspects and lines of process. First, there is spiritual upheaval, of which the declared and pre-eminent end is the spiritual emancipation of individuals. It calls upon men and women to sever the bondage of the flesh and the world and realise the Divine and thus reach the summum bonum of life. In almost every age this call comes through a few highly illumined spiritual persons in whom the highest spiritual ideals of the age appear embodied and whose message has a tremendous rousing effect on the people. Whoever has any spiritual tendencies, then respond to the call and give themselves to spiritual realisation. The first aspect and line of the process of spiritualisation is thus the production of a large number of really spiritual individuals.

The second aspect is the mental. As a result of the spiritual revival, the minds of men and women are filled with a new energy and vision, and this reacts on their thoughts. Old, inherited ideas come in for a strict examination ; many of them are rejected to make room for new ones ; many of them again reveal new contents. In this way, art and literature flourish and grant an unwonted freedom and rich freshness to the intellectual and æsthetic life of the people ; and it is found that in their broad outlines, the intellectual and æsthetic revival reflect the essence of the spiritual ideal itself.

Every age, again, inherits a set of social and domestic customs and traditions, codes of social morality, and religious myths and rituals. Domestic and social morality and customs as well as rituals are as it were the kindergarten of the spiritual children which most men and women are. Through these the majority of mankind mould and refine their mind to prepare themselves for the higher and truly spiritual life. When, therefore, a spiritual upheaval ushers a new age into India, it reacts on the moral codes, customs and rituals of the people,

bringing about tremendous changes in them. The social body so readjusts itself as to be a fit vehicle of the new spirit, and the rituals of religion also undergo necessary modifications in order to be a fit instrument for the realisation of the new spiritual ideals. This is the third aspect and line of progress.

The fourth is the readjustment of India's foreign relations. No nation can live by and for itself alone. Every nation has to deal with other nations. When a new age sets in, there is also a change in India's foreign relations. There is interchange of ideals between India and other peoples. India assimilates new races and cultures and goes out among other nations and deluges them with her spiritual ideals. These international relations have their effect also on the internal conditions of India and her ways and customs.

In the beginning, all these various aspects do not become apparent to most people. Most men are conscious and appreciative of only the first aspect,—the call to the purely spiritual. The other lines of action are only gradually appreciated. There are at least two reasons for this lack of all-round appreciation. The one is the lack of understanding: not all people can understand the social or international implications of the new message. To many these conclusions seem unwarranted and a distortion of the original teaching. Even among the disciples of the Master who generally heralds the new age, there are some who stubbornly resist the secular application of the teaching, and this spirit of resistance is inherited by their followers. The other reason is that there are temperamental differences as well as differences of spiritual development. It cannot be denied that to most of those who have highly developed spiritual faculties, the secular implications of spirituality seem sometimes distasteful. Their mind longs to abide in pure spirituality; they naturally ignore the other aspects. But this limitation is not true of all spiritual natures. There are some who, however highly developed they may be spiritually, yet devote themselves to secular service—the other aspects of the message—out of compassion for the suffering mankind and under the lure of the synthetic vision as typified by the life and teaching of the Master. They feel that unless men are redeemed socially, nationally and internationally, unless there is a requisite improvement in their practical, everyday life, they will fail to rise to the height of spiritual glory which is their goal and salvation.

If there is thus at one end an ultra-religious school denying the secular aspects of the renaissance, there are also, at the

other end, other groups of thinkers and workers who, interested in the intellectual, aesthetic, social, political, economical, or industrial aspects, ignore the fundamental, spiritual, aspect of the new revival. Both these are onesided and, if left to themselves, may frustrate the very purpose of the renaissance. Safety lies in the growth of an intermediate group who, besides being intensely spiritual, will also devote themselves to the work of national and international readjustment in all its aspects. They are the hope of India and the living representations of the new synthetic ideal.

So the present mental tendencies of our youths have to be gradually transmuted into a spiritual yearning for the realisation of God as Transcendent-Immanent, as the One in Many. The way to such a realisation, as prescribed by Swami Vivekananda, is through service of God in man, through what has now come to be recognised and symbolised as the "worship of *Daṛidra-Nārāyaṇa*." This fundamental spirit should permeate all our thoughts and actions. All our studies and search for knowledge should be linked to the infinitude of God. Whatever concern men and things have undoubtedly an aspect in which they blend into the Infinite and manifest the glory thereof. Into politics, industry, social service, into everything let this spirit be infused. How our intellectual pursuits can be transformed into a search and perception of God is beautifully indicated by the spirit in which Sister Nivedita used to study history. Here is a revealing poem by her :

We hear them, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls,
 Soft, soft, through the ages
 Touching earth here and there,
 And the lotuses left on Thy footprints
 Are cities historic,
 Ancient scriptures and poems and temples,
 Noble strivings, stern struggles for Right.

Where lead they, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls?
 O grant us to drink of their meaning!
 Grant us the vision that blindeth,
 The thought that for man is too high.
 Where lead they, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls?

Approach Thou, O Mother, Deliverer!
Thy children, Thy nurslings are we!
On our hearts be the place for Thy stepping,
Thy children, Thy nurslings are we!
Where lead they, O Mother!
Thy footfalls?

Similarly, science may be made into a passionate search for the Invisible Divinity behind the visible.

It must be seen that this attitude implies as a necessary condition complete self-abnegation and renunciation of personal desires. When the radiance of the new vision reflects on the soul, such renunciation, of course, becomes quite easy and natural and almost unconscious. Yet one cannot be too careful. We therefore find that Sri Ramakrishna, the great prophet of world-harmony, repeatedly emphasises these three things in his teaching: renunciation of gold, renunciation of lust, and faith in the Divinity of man. When the mind is purified of carnal desires, the vision of Divinity interpenetrating the world of phenomena becomes natural. When this state has been reached, we feel intensely the glory of the ultimate Universal Vision. To such a realisation, men and the world are not what they seem to the common man. They appear suffused with the radiant presence of God. And then man perceives God in and out of himself and becomes the very personification of the grand ideal after which the present age is aspiring.

One great obstacle in the way of young minds devoting themselves to the realisation of this spiritual world-synthesis is the superstition that religion is a life of passivity, and devoid of the glow of life that characterises more concrete struggles. Young minds want the taste of power. They seek those fields of action where they can wield great energies, and this often attracts them to lesser ideals. Let us assure them that the life of spiritual struggle, of the struggle to realise the Universal Vision such as we have discussed above, requires the greatest amount of strength. There is an amount of adventure in it as is not to be met with anywhere else and may daunt even the stoutest heart. Spiritual realisation is the manliest of games and the most daring of adventures. India and the world are eagerly waiting for those brave souls who will build up the glorious future of humanity through their titanic life-struggles. Where are they? They alone can lead humanity to the land of promise.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE DHUNI NIGHT

Every year thereafter, Swami took a class to the Ashrama for Yoga practices. In the year 1906 the students had the unusual privilege of having two Swamis with them, for now Swami Prakashananda had arrived as the assistant Swami at the Temple. The latter's knowledge of Sanskrit chants was very extensive and his inspiring chanting was often heard at meal times. He also relieved Swami Trigunatita of some of the classes.

In the second week of this class was the first night of the new moon, and this was appointed by Swami Trigunatita as the first Dhuni night for that year. On a previous occasion Swami made a special pilgrimage to the Ashrama, among the objects of which was to select one of the hills on the property as a suitable site on which to hold the Dhuni ceremony, and having selected the one most fitted for the purpose, he alone, with his own hands and a small hatchet, blazed a trail to the top. Then when he came with the class mentioned above, a man student was instructed to widen and level the trail, and a spot at the summit large enough for the fire and for seating room for the students, was cleared off. In the centre of this space was a large raised triangle of earth, pointing to the north, on which the Dhuni fire was to burn all night, with a circular trench about it to keep the fire in bounds.

The walk from the cabins to the top of the hill was about half a mile and as the hour of eight drew near, the students, each of whom carried a lantern, started out in single file with Swami at the head. The long row of lanterns made a beautiful spectacle as the little column climbed the winding path through the bushes to the top of the hill or, as it was now named, "Dhuni Giri".

Prior to the evening hour the men had carried up a large supply of wood to last through the night and after the students were seated the fire was lit and the ceremony began. The two Swamis were seated at the south side of the fire, the men

were at the north while the women were seated along the other sides. Swami Trigunatita, having chanted, spoke on the significance of the Dhuni. For the next three hours, chanting, speaking and reading of Scriptures filled the time. After this came the fire ceremony. First, the two Swamis circled the students seven times around the edge of the open space, chanting "Haribol" as they went ; then the students stood about the fire and, as Swami Trigunatita chanted the mantrams they repeated the words after him during the purification ceremony. Every student had been instructed to bring a little oil or water and some wild flowers or leaves and, as they repeated each line after Swami, they poured some of the oil or threw a few of the flowers on the fire as an offering for purification, from every phase of selfishness and ignorance that stood in the way to true knowledge.

During the all-night service, Swami Prakashananda enchanted the students with his melodious rendering of beautiful Sanscrit songs, new to Western ears, but the burden of devotion they carried was unmistakable and sounded a sympathetic chord in the hearts and souls of the listeners.

After the ceremony the students entered into a long meditation under Swami Trigunatita and at its close Swami read stories of Indian life and told a number of anecdotes from the life of the Master and his own experiences as a disciple, with intermissions of silence until the hour before dawn, when all arose to their feet to watch for the first rays announcing the coming of the Lord of light. Below them the valley lay bathed in the ghostly radiance of the faint light of the new moon, indescribably beautiful, adding its charm to the spiritual impressions of the night. The long-drawn-out notes of wandering coyotes (a species of wild dog) came up to their ears from the valley and once, in the distance, they heard the scream of a mountain lion (puma) disturbed by the fire. At last the first flush of dawn appeared in the eastern sky, followed by the gorgeous heralds of his arrival in cloud and sky, until the great luminary himself flashed his golden rays over the horizon, rising above the mountains in regal glory. After suitable chants in salutation, the little band took their downward way to breakfast and the morning duties. The balance of the day was declared a rest day.

This Dhuni, with slight variations, was typical of many to follow in future years, except that not always was a second Swami present.

BUDDHISM AND WHAT IT DID FOR INDIA*

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

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The initial force of Aryan civilisation was spent by the time it reached the western frontier of Bengal ; or, it would be more correct to say that the new elements that had entered into Aryan society caused a great transformation of its original character. In Mithila or North Bihar the Brahman ascendancy in thought was lost and the Kshatriyas began to think and act for themselves and resist the Brahmanic supremacy. Some scholars† have called it the Kshatriya revolt against the Brahmins, but it should rather be styled an inevitable new stage in the evolution of India.

A high philosophy, quite distinct from the Vedic religion, was developed first in the hermitages and then at the courts of Kshatriya kings like Janaka, and it led, in the course of time, to the rise of a great Kshatriya preacher. It was Gautama Buddha, the lion of the Sakya clan, who rose in open protest against the power and ritual of the Brahmins and thus introduced a new force into Indian life and thought.

Let us consider the gifts of Buddhism to India. They were six in number :—

(i) First, Buddhism gave us a popular religion, without any complex and unintelligible ritual that could be performed only by a priestly class. It deliberately set itself to appeal to the masses, and wonderfully succeeded in winning their hearts by its simplicity, its emotional element, its easy ethical code, its use of the vernacular language in its scriptures, its popular method of teaching by means of parables, its worship in congregation. It introduced a personal element into religion, in the form of a known human Saviour, in the place of the impersonal forces of Nature to whom the Vedic Aryans used to pray and the passionless abstract deity adored in the Upanishads.

(ii) Image-worship was most probably introduced into India by the Buddhists. We can conjecture that the earliest statues

* The second of a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

† Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I, (3rd edition), 296-479. The contest originated much earlier, before the caste system had become rigid.

of Buddha were set up as purely commemorative of a great master and preacher, but they soon came to be worshipped as representations of the godhead. For sheltering these sacred images houses had to be built, and thus temples arose, while the Vedic Aryans had been contented with offering sacrifices on altars in the open air, as was the case with the Aryans of ancient Persia.

(iii) The monastic system, or the organization of religious devotees in disciplined communities or orders, was another innovation due to Buddhism. It is true that solitary recluses and old men retiring to forests in order to end their days in lonely contemplation, had been known before. but not the banding together of religious devotees into a fraternity of monks, obeying a common head and living together under a common code of disciplinary rules.

(iv) Buddhism created a vast and varied literature in the spoken tongue, which was meant for the common people and not reserved for a learned priesthood.

(v) The most charming contribution of Buddhism to Indian life was in the domain of sculpture and architecture. Here was a new element which the Vedic Aryans had not thought of, and which, though introduced by the Buddhists, continued with growing volume in the later Hindu period. The Buddhists set the example of dedicating cave temples, which the Hindus and Jains followed in after ages.

(vi) Buddhism established an intimate contact between India and foreign countries. This religion was India's greatest gift to the outer world. It was a universal movement, a force irrespective of country and caste, which the whole ancient East was free to accept. Indian monks and scholars carried Buddhism to foreign countries from the third century before Christ onwards, and thereafter the converts of these countries looked up to India as a holy land, the cradle of their faith, a pilgrimage to which was the crowning act of a pious householder's life.

TWO STREAMS OF HUMAN MOVEMENT

Thus, there were two streams of human movement, one of native Buddhist teachers going out of India and another of foreign Buddhist pilgrims and students flocking to India, which broke our isolation in that age. The Hindus followed the example thus set, and from the third century after Christ we

have records of Hindu missionaries and colonists settling in Further India and several of the Pacific Islands.

The result was that, in what is called the Buddhistic age, the fusion of foreign non-Aryan immigrant tribes and families with the Indian population became an easy occurrence of every day. History records many examples of it. In the first century of the Christian era, some families that bear Persian names are found settled in Western India and patronising Brahmans and Buddhist monks alike. The Karle and Nasik cave inscriptions tell us that Harapharna (i.e., Holophernes), son of Setapharna, a Sova-Saka, gave away a cave-hall surrounded by nine cells to the Mahasanghika branch of Buddhist monks; and that Ushavadata (i.e., Rishava-datta) a Saka, the son-in-law of the Kshatrapa Nahapana, gave away three lakhs of cows and sixteen villages to the Brahmans, paid for the marriage of eight Brahman maidens, fed a lakh of Brahmans for one year, dedicated a cave-monastery for the use of the Buddhist begging friars, and made a gift of the village of Karanjika for the support of the ascetics living in the caves at Valuraka, without distinction of sect. ("Epigr. Indica," VII, 58, 72; VIII 78, 86). In later times, when Buddhism decayed, these foreign settlers were quietly and completely absorbed in the mass of the *Hindu* population, their foreign origin having been forgotten during their long previous stay in India.

Thus Buddhism, without at first intending it, contributed very largely to the synthesis which has produced the modern Hindu faith and society.

In this expansion of India outside and consolidation within Asoka had made the first beginnings in the third century before Christ; but the movement became vast and sweeping only in the first century after Christ, under the Scythians and the Bactrian Greeks and Indo-Parthians whom the Scythians absorbed and replaced in political domination.

Mahayana Buddhism advanced conquering the minds of men to the west, north-west and north out of India, while the Kushan emperors penetrated with their arms from Central Asia south-eastwards into the Gangetic Valley. Thus, these two forces, physical and spiritual, had the same effect of bringing foreign settlers into India, putting the Indian stamp on them, and finally converting their descendants into unmistakable Hindus a few centuries afterwards. The Sulaiman range ceased to exist as a barrier on our west, and the Punjab and Afghanistan, Khurasan and Seistan became as one country.

The ports of our west coast,—Sopara, Cambay, Broach and Chaul,—facilitated the same immigration by sea, and Konkan and Gujrat and even Malwa became the homes of foreign tribes that accepted the culture and religion of the land of their adoption. Witness the satraps of Ujjain. Chashtana, the founder of this line, was the son of Psamotika, a name which we find in the dynastic lists of ancient Egypt and Babylonia alike. But his descendants soon became Hindus and patrons of the Hindu religion.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF NEWCOMERS

The newcomers into India retained their un-Hindu foreign names and customs for some time, because Buddhism did not insist on uniformity in these points, but embraced all within its tolerant bosom. After a few generations, however, when the Hindu revival began, the descendants of these foreigners were hammered or coaxed into uniformity with the Hindus around them in name, social practices and manners; and a homogeneous population and culture in India was the result. Thus, the Andhra king, Sri Pulumayi, the son of Vashisti, is praised for having brought society back to the rigid purity of Hindu law by "stopping mesalliances between the four castes" through the extermination of the casteless Kshaharata dynasty of satraps. ("Epigr. Indica," VII, 60). And yet this king gave a village to the Saramanas or Buddhist priests of the Bhatayaniya fraternity, living in the Queen's cave (Ibid. p. 67).

So, too, the earlier rulers of the Kushan empire in India bear purely Turki names like Kujula Kadphisa, Vajeski, Kaniski, and Huviski; but immediately after Huviski we have the clear Hindu name of Vasudeva.

The Mongolian Ahom dynasty that conquered Assam in the thirteenth century, at first used non-Indian names like Sudangpa (1397), Supimpha (1493), Suhangmung (1497), Sukhampha (1552), and then from the beginning of the seventeenth century their descendants became Hindu Rajahs with names like Pratap Sinha (1603), Jayadhwaj (1648), Udayaditya (1669), Rudra Sinha (1696), etc.

At first the Scythians (Sakas) in India used to keep up their connection with their far-off homeland west of the Bolan Pass. Thus, the Mathura lion-capital of the first century A.D. bears an inscription in honour of all the inhabitants of the Saka-land: "Sarvasa sakarastanasa puyae" ("Epigr. Indica," IX, 146).

Now, this "Saka-sthan" in Sanskrit, became "sekestene" in Greek, "sejistan" in mediæval Persian and "seistan" in modern Persian. It is the south-eastern corner of Persia.

But a few generations later we find the Sakas completely naturalised in India and absorbed into the Hindu population. So, too, the Hun invaders of the fifth century A.D., after many fights with the Gupta empire, lost the chance of political domination in India, and settled down as peaceful common people, contributing tribes to various Hindu castes and professions. Thus, one recognised Rajput clan bears the name of Hun. Their nomadic brethren, the Gujars, after many wanderings since migration to India, have settled in the Delhi district and the country west of it, and given their name to the province of Gujrat or "Gurjara-rashtra," to the district of Gujranwala, and to the Rajput clan of Bar-Gujars.

REORGANISATION OF HINDU SOCIETY

After the upheaval caused by the mass incursions of the Scythians and other nomadic races from the first to the sixth century of the Christian era, Hindu society was reorganised and graded anew. The caste-grouping then adopted became stereotyped in every province. History has preserved no record of how this happened, nor the names of the mighty social leaders and Brahman scholars who imposed their will on such a huge population throughout such an immense extent of country, and poured the fluid elements of society into a mould where they have acquired rigidity for all time to come. But we get a few glimpses from the identical tradition preserved in places as far apart as Gujrat, Assam, Lower Bengal, and Orissa.* In each of these provinces there is a universally accepted belief that an ancient king wanted to perform a Vedic sacrifice, but found the local Brahmans ignorant and impure in their lives (like the English clergy of the earlier years of King Alfred) that he had to induce five pure Brahmans to come from Kanauj and settle in his kingdom, and to these five immigrants the best local Brahman families of later times trace their descent.

At that forgotten reorganisation of society, the passion everywhere was to revert to the pristine purity of blood,—at least of social practice and religious rites,—that had existed before the Hun flood submerged North India, and the seat of

*Imp. Gazetteer of India, 3rd edn. ii. Bengali tradition about King Adisur; Bombay Gazetteer, 1st edn.

this pure type was Kanauj in Madhyadesh or the Ganga-Jamuna doab.

This huge reconstruction of Hindu society stretches, with its ebb and flow, from the sixth to the tenth century after Christ. During this period the Scythian and other foreign settlers were completely Hinduised, the Rajputs rose to kingship as the ruling caste, with their numberless principalities covering the whole country from Attock and Und on the Indus to Palama in South Bihar. They made themselves the ardent champions of the new Hinduism. It was on this Rajput wall that the Muslim invaders from the north-west impinged at the close of the tenth century.

This moral transformation of savage foreigners is the greatest glory of India, and a proof of the death-defying vitality of Hinduism, considered not as a dogmatic creed (which it never was), but as a social force and civilising agency. The spirit of India has triumphed over time and change and kept the composite Indian people's mind as active and keen as in the best days of pure Aryan ascendancy. The blending of races here has not led to that intellectual and moral deterioration which is found among the present-day mixed population of what was once Spanish America.

As a distinguished Orientalist has truly observed, "The most important fact in Hindu history is overlooked (by our orthodox writers). I mean the attractive power of Hindu civilisation, which has enabled it to assimilate and absorb into itself every foreign invader except the Moslem and the European. Those Indians have a poor idea of their country's greatness, who do not realise how it has tamed and civilised the nomads of Central Asia, so that wild Turkman tribes have been transformed into some of the most famous of the Rajput royal races." (A. M. T. Jackson in "Indian Antiquary" 1910, p. 77).

THE DECAY OF BUDDHISM

The history of Buddhism in India is a story of strange transformations running through twenty centuries. The astonishing result of it is that this religion, which has converted nearly a quarter of the human race, has totally disappeared from the land of its birth. But all the stages of this growth, transformation, decay and death can be historically traced.

In the origin, Buddhism was not avowedly a new creed, but an appeal for holier living in the bosom of the existing Hindu religion and society. Buddha was not a prophet, but a

saint, who urged his hearers to give up their vices and follies and to practise that purity of conduct and sincerity of belief which is the essence of every true religion. He himself, so far as we can judge from the scanty volume of what is accepted as his true sayings, taught neither new dogmas, nor new rituals, nor even a new philosophy.†

The basic doctrine of Buddhism, as all scholars now admit, sprang from the pre-existing Hindu philosophy of the Sankhya and the later Upanishads,—the belief, namely, that human life is a misery and the cessation of rebirth is the means of extinguishing that misery. Such cessation comes from moral self-control and the repression of all desires. The eightfold path enjoined by Buddha for this purpose is only a code of general ethics, and not the special creed of a revealed and distinctive faith.

As Kern points out, "It does not necessarily follow that the Buddha was supposed to have invented the whole of morality. On the contrary, the Master himself repeatedly extols the morals and virtues of the ancient Rishis. . . . Buddhism has wisely adopted many articles of morality and pious customs flowing from the source of the Brahmanist code. . . . The sect originally had no moral code at all, except the prohibitions and duties prescribed to the members of the Order." ["Manual of Indian Buddhism," 68-69.]

Thus, so far as the original philosophy of Buddhism goes, there is hardly any break of continuity between Buddha and the Hindu sages who had preceded him. In the "Jatakas" Buddha says again and again that true piety consists not in the performance of ritual or the repetition of set prayers, but in holy living and holy dying.

In the proclamations of the great royal preacher Asoka, we see the same insistence on general morality as the real aim of the Buddhistic "Dharma". In the second Pillar Edict Asoka says, "Dharma is good; but what is Dharma? It consists in doing good to the many, kindness, charity, truthfulness, purity."

The definition of Dharma is even more explicit in the fourteenth Rock Edict:—

"Dharma has great fruits. It consists in much kindness to slaves and servants, reverence to elders, control of the passions,

† Kern's "Manual," p. 17—"We only surmise that both systems (viz., the Buddhist and the Sankhya) derive from a common remote source." Also p. 50 middle.

almsgiving to Sramanas and Brahmanas, and to others similar benefit of Dharma."

So much for the creed of the new Preacher. Nor did Buddha lay down a special ritual for his followers. That was of later growth. The only new thing he introduced was the institution of the orders of monks and nuns. But even the rules of monastic discipline left by him seem to have been few, simple and undefined. They had to be codified and stiffened after his death. This is clearly proved by the traditions relating to the first Council held immediately after his death and especially of the second Council, that of Vaisali, the calling together of which would not have been necessary if the rules of monastic life had been fully elaborated and laid down in writing, so as to obviate all doubt and controversy about their nature. [Kern, 103, Rockhill's "Life of Buddha," 171-180.]

With the disappearance of the towering personality of its founder, began the long line of changes in Buddhism. First, an attempt—a very natural attempt—was made to set up a scripture and a code of recorded rules in the place of the living teacher who had disappeared and his sayings which had till then been orally preserved. Immediately after the Nirvana of Buddha, five hundred monks assembled at Rajgir, under the presidency of the aged Maha-Kasyapa, for this purpose.

"Kasyapa the Great, whom the Master had designated as his successor, made the proposal that the brethren should assemble to rehearse the Lord's precepts. The proposal was adopted." [Kern, 102, 103; Rockhill 157-160, B. al, ii. 162.]

But it was hopeless to reach uniformity by means of a council of bishops, without an ever-present visible Pope or dictator of the faith. A hundred years after the first Council, difference of opinion as to the orthodox doctrines and practices made the summoning of a second Council necessary. The scandalous lives and doctrines of the monks of Vaisali roused the indignation of the reformer Yasas, and he was supported by the venerable priests Sarvaka and Revata. But it was to no effect. The Vaisali Council, instead of restoring uniformity to the Church, broke up in disorder; two different councils seem to have been held here by the two parties, neither recognising the authority of the other, and the Church was rent by an open schism. [Kern, 103-109; Rockhill, 171-172; Watters, ii. 75-77.]



A LETTER FROM ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[We received the following letter from M. Rolland lately, mainly in connection with an article by Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy, which appeared in our February issue (*Romain Rolland on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda*, p. 49 ff). We sent relevant extracts of the letter to Mr. Roy whose reply we are glad to publish along with M. Rolland's letter. *Swami Ashokananda, Editor, P.B.*]

4th March, 1928.

Dear Swami Ashokananda,

Thank you for your friendly letter. I have been very much moved at receiving from the venerable Swami Shivananda a long letter full of valuable remembrances and explanations. I hope to show my gratitude by writing to him and excuse myself for not having done so up to the present. The works I have in hand, which have taken longer than I thought, have not allowed me the necessary concentration for other thoughts. I have only just finished to-day the first volume of the new work which I am devoting to Beethoven ; and at last I can give myself to that on Ramakrishna.

I hope the (involuntary) bringing together of these two names does not astonish you ! In studying very closely for a year the musical genius and the creative personality of Beethoven, I have been able better to verify what I think I indicated to you in a letter : the relationship of our master-musicians of Europe, (truly inspired like Beethoven), with your great seers of India. They are in direct communion with the Divine and a Beethoven is by nature in a constant state of "Yoga". The only profound difference with India is that with us there does not exist a secular tradition, well-informed and rational, of this spiritual intercourse with God ; so that each of our inspired ones is a solitary person who undergoes anew the divine experience entirely without a guide, with its risks and perils, often very great. And so I have arrived at the discovery that the deafness, which was his tragic lot and which "walled" him up even whilst he was alive, was the result of his ecstatic states of music and "Yoga", producing mental disturbances closely bordering on apoplexy. He used to live in transports of audible revelation,

in which the rest of the world no longer existed for him ; and his powerful will was entirely given up to the effort of apprehending the God which was consuming him. It is a matter for regret that India has only had knowledge of Europe through Anglo-Saxon races who are of all European races the most destitute of musical and mystical genius, the hardest and most practical of people, only great, with some few exceptions, on the field of action and in the worlds of scientific and practical experience. If India had known better the depths of soul of old Germany and the inner life hidden away in old mediæval France (which is extant always under the noisy waves of what I call in *John Christopher* "the market on the square"), she would have felt our common brotherhood.

I have read in the February *Prabuddha Bharata* the interview which Dilip Kumar Roy has published about me. . . . I am much dissatisfied with it. . . . He attributes to me remarks entirely different from those which I made. I will mention a few of them, by way of example.

First, one of the motives which he attributes to me for writing a book on Ramakrishna is to defend Mukherji's book against "jealousy and heart-burning" which has gathered round it. I said nothing like that. I said that his "Face of Silence" had been the first book which had revealed to me the personality of Ramakrishna and that I was grateful to him for it. But I was not going to write myself a book on the great thought of India for the purpose of defending Mukherji ! It is not a question about Mukherji, it is about Ramakrishna. I am not going to mix myself up in Indian controversies. I have to put before the Western world my own revelation of the "Man-God" of India.

Secondly, Roy attributes these words to me : "Our people are getting more and more prone to belittle wholesale the great men of Asia, and they are little by little losing all interest in things Asiatic." This is just the contrary to the reality. The European public has never been more interested than to-day in things Asiatic, and never more attracted than to-day by the fascinating light of the great men of Asia. And it is this fact which disturbs the nationalists of the West and makes them write books like "Defence of the West" by the ultra-nationalistic and reactionary Frenchman, Henry Massis. A person only "defends" himself when he thinks himself to be threatened. The very attitude of the "Occidentalists" of to-day who denounce the supposed danger of the East proves that the East is already taking her place.

Thirdly, Roy attributes to me some unkind words with regard to the Schopenhauer Society. This is altering my own thoughts in a manner which pains me. I have a very lively sympathy for the Schopenhauer Society which, of all the great philosophical societies of Europe, is really the one which is most interested in India. It devoted to India its last international congress of the last year, and its new "Jahrbuch" which has just appeared contains the full report of it. I have asked the director of the Society, Professor Hans Zint, Senator of the free town of Danzig, to have a copy sent to you. You will read in it of some remarkable conferences on Europe and India. (I have modestly collaborated in it with some pages devoted to Vivekananda and Paul Deussen). A Society which has preserved the pious worship of its great master, Schopenhauer (the first thinker of Europe, in whose veins was transfused the blood of Indian thought), a Society which (in opposition to those which make use of the name of Kant and the other great metaphysicians of Germany) always defends the spirit of the intellectual communion between all the peoples of Europe, Asia and the world, such a Society deserves our respect and our sympathy. I expressed my astonishment before Roy that Paul Deussen should have doubted the exceptional importance of Vivekananda when he came to visit him, and that the Schopenhauer Society founded by Paul Deussen should have lost the recollection of this visit. But there was in it no desire to hurt the feelings of men whom I respect and admire. On the contrary I remarked on the enthusiastic feeling with which the President of the Society, Professor Hans Zint, read the quotation from Vivekananda which I had made in my article.

Fourthly, with reference to "social service" and to the "uplifting work for the masses," Roy has attributed to me a quite untrue remark about Gandhi. He makes me say, "Why do not your great leaders, like Gandhi, for instance, take more seriously to this urgent work that lies before you all?" This is absurd. I could have reproached Gandhi for a lack of the great metaphysical spirit, of broad intellectualism, of deep comprehension of art and thought. But the last thing that one could have reproached him for would be his lack of interest in "social service," to which he has devoted his life up to the extreme limit of his strength. If there is in Gandhi an incontestable holiness, a complete denial of himself, a divine sacrifice of his entire being, it is in his service of the community. For this sublime example I bow myself before him and take the dust of his feet. Roy

then has attributed to me here the very opposite of my real thought. I could mention other smaller errors. This is enough to show the inexactitude of this interview and I do not speak at all of everything he has forgotten to note.

I do not question the sincerity of D. K. Roy ; it does not allow of discussion. And further I am sorry to have to contradict his account. It is disagreeable to me to complain against D. Roy who is a charming person, an excellent musician, with brilliant gifts, well-intentioned and who has always shown me a sympathy for which I am most thankful to him. He has written it in good faith. . . .

Kindly accept, dear Swami Ashokananda, my brotherly greetings.

ROMAIN ROLLAND.

[Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy's reply: I am grateful to the Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* for having sent me the letter of Monsieur Rolland early. I may say a word or two to obviate the misunderstanding of all and particularly of Monsieur Rolland whom I admire and love so much.

First of all, I plead guilty to his charge of having at places incorrectly reported him. I should have sent the report to him first for correction. The reason why I did not do so was that a few years back I had published a similar interview in *Current Thought* and Monsieur Rolland had thanked me kindly for the same. I received a similar letter of thanks from Bertrand Russell on my sending to him the report of my interview with him, published in *The Modern Review*, December, 1927. All this had emboldened me—a little unjustifiably perhaps—and I published the interview with Monsieur Rolland a little hastily. I trust Monsieur Rolland will read this reply of mine with the kind forbearance for which he has always been renowned and forgive me for my having given him pain as he points out in his letter. None would be more sorry for this than I who not only love him but have derived no small inspiration from his life and personal contact. Let me assure him that I will never forget the debt I owe him, and it is this consciousness which makes me feel all the more guilty in having reported him incorrectly.

A word or two as to the explanation of my error however :

When I heard from Monsieur Rolland about his desire to write a book about Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, I grew so enthusiastic that I did not pay much attention to all that he said about the origin of his desire, about the Schopenhauer Society and the rest. I wrote the interview not to belittle the philosopher who did not know anything about Vivekananda but to let my countrymen know about the disinterestedness of Monsieur Rolland who, in the midst of his great stress of multifarious activities, should have the time and the energy to write such a book about two great Indians. It is worthy of him and his wonderful

vision indeed, and it is this vision of his, which helped him so much in gaining the marvellous insight into the life and movements of Gandhi. To me this was the motive power of reporting the interview. Mahatma Gandhi I admire from the bottom of my heart and he knows it. I had not the slightest desire of insinuating that he lacked in ardour as to social service. I do not know myself, however, why I had the impression that Monsieur Rolland had asked me as to why he (Gandhi) did not go in for social work heart and soul. It is curious that I had and I ask the forgiveness of both in all humility and sincerity.

Only one thing I must say however in self-justification—though not for the purpose of contradicting Monsieur Rolland—when he says that Europe is not growing more and more self-centred vis-à-vis the world at large and the great men of Asia.

I must of course say at the outset that I accept Monsieur Rolland's statement to the effect that *he* had not made the above remark. Only I will try a little to explain why I had the impression that he had.

Russell had made exactly the observation which I have erroneously attributed to Monsieur Rolland, when I saw him at Cornwall in June, 1927. I had sent the report to him before publication and he had made some very minor corrections leaving this observation intact. I cite this as an objective proof that he did make the observation. (I have published Russell's letter of approval in *The Modern Review*.) Then, I had myself the impression this time that Europe was passing through a phase of jingoism and narrow nationalism just now. Men like Massis, Valéry, Norman Angel and others corroborated my impression, though some of them regret it. Consequently when Monsieur Rolland wanted to deprecate the recrudescence of such chauvinism, I thought that he meant it more generally than he had intended. I trust Monsieur Rolland will understand this.

Nevertheless, I am very sorry for having wrongly reported him. Only I trust he will believe me when I say that the reason which impelled me to write the interview was that I wanted our countrymen to appreciate his greatness in undertaking such a disinterested task. Besides, my enthusiasm knew no bounds when he told me he was going to write a book about Ramakrishna-Vivekananda—the two men whom I have revered since the dawn of my religious consciousness. That is why I looked upon the other items as comparatively unimportant. For my errors, therefore, it is my enthusiasm which was to blame and not any deliberate desire to misrepresent.]

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—II

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

TYPE No. 3.—DAY SCHOOLS

For our boys till they attain the age of puberty, much more useful service can be rendered through a day-school run on proper lines, than through a hostel. Just like the growth of their tender limbs, the growth of their intellectual and emotional faculties requires very careful and intelligent nursing. Each stage, infancy, childhood and adolescence, has its peculiar characteristics and the business of the teacher is to adjust the surroundings and activities of the individual in such a way that it may be gently led through all these stages and allowed to unfold, by a gradual and natural process, its various faculties like so many flower-blossoms. *A child has to be just helped to grow* and not sawed, planed and chiselled like a plank of wood. The teacher's task is more like that of the cultivator than that of the carpenter or mason. Formerly education in Western countries was supposed to resemble the work of a mason. Teachers presumed that they were to build in the pupils' mind an edifice of knowledge by piling up information on various subjects. Thus they used to thrust their own knowledge on the pupil without doubting for a moment whether the pupil's mind was fit for receiving it. But since the contributions of Pestalozzi and Froebel, meant specially for the education of infants, the entire educational system for children and even youths in the West has undergone a revolution. Pedagogy has developed into a complete science and hundreds of experiments are being actually carried on there to make new researches regarding methods of teaching, school-discipline, etc. Pestalozzi and Froebel for the first time detected the fallacy of ignoring the pupil's mind as a subjective factor of education. Psychology of infancy, childhood, adolescence and youth has commenced to play a very important role in education and has become an interesting field for useful pedagogic research. The very function of education has been discovered to be mainly psychological in so far as it has been found to consist in simply helping the development of the

inborn faculties and not in stuffing the brain with information. *Repeated exercise of each of the faculties proceeding from inner impulse is all that is required for its healthy development. To arouse self-activity of the pupil for exercising its various faculties has therefore been ascertained to be the primary business of the teacher.* This has made the teacher's task immensely complicated ; for to rouse self-activity, the teacher is required to have an expert knowledge of the pupil's taste and capacity, which vary enormously with heredity, age and environment. Syllabus, routine, lessons, school-discipline have all to be based fundamentally on the psychological requirements of different groups of pupils classified at least according to age into three broad divisions, namely, infancy, childhood and adolescence ; otherwise the very object of developing the faculties has every chance of being frustrated. Every effort is made there to make each particular lesson easy and interesting ; succeeding lessons are graduated according to the growing power of the pupil's mind ; lessons on different subjects are co-ordinated as far as possible to save specially little ones from unnecessary mental strain ; pupils are led very gently from the known to the unknown, from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the concrete to the abstract ; training of the senses, specially of sight and sound, is provided and first-hand observation is made to be the very basis of all knowledge ; training of the hand is imparted through manual work and this is made interesting by co-ordinating it with lessons on different subjects ; pictures, charts, models, maps, articles for object-lessons, articles for interesting games, together with hundreds of devices, are requisitioned for converting education of children into a kind of highly amusing play which can easily stir up the self-activity of the pupils for the natural unfoldment of their inborn faculties. What we have said in this connection does not suffice to give even a distant hint of the devoted attention, patient and systematic investigations and epoch-making achievements of the huge army of educators in the Western countries. Hundreds of books containing original contributions to various topics connected with school-education have already been published and strict measures are being adopted to put into practice at least the fundamental psychological principles. In some of the countries coercion of pupils has been penalised by legislation ; teaching has been made a subject for study, in which one has to specialise and obtain the necessary certificate just like a lawyer or the medical practitioner, before he is allowed to take up the profession of teaching.

In our country the state of things is quite different ; although the authorities here are trying very slowly to improve school-education in the light of the accepted methods of the advanced countries, we need not enter into any detailed comment to point out that in most of our schools pupils are still subjected to ideals and methods of education, which have long become obsolete in the West. Ideals and methods, which have absolutely no relation with the needs and capacities of the evolving mind of the pupil, may be called in this age of pedagogic enlightenment, simply barbarous. By inflicting this barbarous method upon the school-going population, we are perpetrating a horrible act of cruelty to the young ones of this country ; in the name of education we are unconsciously trampling upon their budding faculties, impeding their healthy growth and development of manhood. Our ignorance of modern methods cannot be excused and permitted to exonerate this positively criminal offence in view of the vast array of pedagogic publications before us.

Our young ones are as it were in a house on fire and they demand immediate relief. Unless they are relieved from the deadening pressure of this obnoxious system of school-education, most of them will have absolutely no chance for normal development. This is why we believe, vigorous efforts need be made for improving school-education and we shall serve the cause better if we can set up a few model day-schools thoroughly up-to-date in all respects and yet strictly loyal to all that is decidedly good and healthy in our old indigenous system.

TYPE NO. 3 (A).—DAY-SCHOOL FOR INFANTS

Such a school, even if it be meant solely for little children, requires, as a matter of absolute necessity, plenty of equipments and a good deal of expert knowledge. These are as much indispensable even for a modern infant-school as the school-premises or the school teacher. We shall indeed render a valuable service to the country if we can build up at least one such model institution for our infants, and find out by patient and systematic experiment how we may, with the strictest possible economy of men and money, adapt the perfectly rational and universal principles of pedagogic science to Indian conditions and requirements. Let us concentrate on rearing up at least one such school and try seriously to contribute as a result of our experiments something substantial to the important subject of rearing infant-education in India.

TYPE NO. 3 (B).—DAY-SCHOOL FOR BIGGER CHILDREN

For bigger children we shall do well to set up model day-schools separately for boys and girls. These also will require experts and equipments costing much more than infant-schools. We should estimate our strength before we launch any programme of a day-school of any variety. We should always remember that our strength and resources are limited and should always be conscious of the fact that we have to utilise them very carefully so that we may produce the greatest possible effect, which can be done by a thrifty use of our men and money after setting up a number of model types of institutions. We should never think that we shall serve the cause of education by simply establishing any number of stereotyped schools in the country.

TYPE NO. 3 (C).—FULL-FLEDGED DAY-SCHOOL

If after doing all that is needed for establishing and conducting one of the two model types for infants and bigger children, any of our centres can spare surplus men and energy, it may then and only then be permitted to extend the scope of the school by trying to evolve the remaining type. We should always remember that just as psychological requirements distinguish boys from girls, so do they distinguish little children of either sex from the bigger ones ; and this is precisely the reason why absolutely separate arrangements are to be made for each group if we at all intend to have an eye upon the quality of our work.

TYPE NO. 3 (D).—FULL-FLEDGED DAY-SCHOOL WITH BOARDING HOUSE

After finishing what is necessary for running day-schools both for infants and bigger children, if any of our centres can still spare energy and money, it may proceed to establish a hostel only for the bigger ones according to type 2 A. This will complete a full-fledged model school. In the process of evolution the hostel may precede or follow the establishment of the school. What we intend to emphasise is that we should clearly comprehend the requisites of each of the types separately and measure our strength carefully before attempting to give shape to any one of them.

Each of these types represents an institution either purely for boys or for girls.

TYPE NO. 4.—RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

A complete residential school after the ancient Gurukula system will undoubtedly have the greatest educational value. Boys below eight or nine should better live with parents or in nurseries conducted by female experts, because at this tender age they positively require much more loving care and attention than what they may possibly get from male teachers. In our ancient system also the age of admission was at or about nine when the *Upanayana* ceremony was usually performed. So by residential school we mean a school run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, where boys from the age of eight or nine right up to the age of matriculation will reside and get their academic school education together with all that is necessary for a healthy and all-round growth of their body and mind.

A residential school therefore should be located in a healthy place and it must have environmental conditions conducive to physical and mental growth, and this is the first requisite of such an institution.

The second thing necessary is adoption of improved methods. We have already observed that so far as our school boys are concerned, no amount of arrangements for supplementary training for developing physique, efficiency and character will be of any avail until and unless the boys are relieved to a considerable extent from the deadening pressure of the unscientific and unnatural methods of teaching, which are commonly practised in our ordinary schools. Modern educationists are unanimous in believing *that the child's brain is a highly delicate organ and therefore requires very careful handling ; that the teacher's business consists solely in helping the natural unfolding of its latent faculties ; that the teacher can help this process only by rousing self-activity of the boys, which is the most potent and indispensable factor for a healthy development of their faculties ; that this self-activity can be awakened only by loving and sympathetic attention to their actual need, taste and capacity ; that syllabus, routine methods of imparting lessons, school-discipline, all must conform primarily to these important psychological requirements of the boys.* If we consider in the light of this pedagogic knowledge what an ordinary school of our country is doing, we are simply shocked to find that it is *only a tyrants' house where wagon-loads of information on various subjects are thrust upon young minds by a Terroristic discipline* and nobody cares to understand with

sympathy even the obvious biological demands of the tender ones. We have already noted that unless we can mend this barbarous method and save our boys from the abnormal strain that is put upon them we cannot help them materially in any way. *This is the reason why in a residential school adoption of improved methods is a matter of absolute necessity.* Otherwise it can never be an ideal institution for the development of boys.

Then, of course, all that is needed for physical development and efficiency as well as character-building have certainly to be provided for. The requirements for these have been already noted in the first article. Arrangements for vocational training as mentioned in connection with high schools on the topic of vocational training in the previous article should also be made.

The very object of a residential school is to afford all possible facilities to each individual pupil so that it may have a healthy growth of body and mind, and this makes the task of conducting a residential school extremely difficult and complicated, requiring a good deal of expert attention and plenty of resources for necessary equipments. While building up a residential school we should remember that our immediate aim is to furnish the country with a model of a full-fledged institution for our boys, and this is precisely the reason why we should be particularly conscious of our responsibilities involved in the task and take special care always to measure our strength, and proceed very cautiously. *If we cannot procure the requisites for such an institution, we should see if we can develop any of the varieties of Type 3 ; if we cannot do even that, we should try to rear up either of the varieties of Type 2 ; failing that we should of course strive to do whatever we possibly can for Type 1.* If this be observed as a working principle by our centres, fixing their attention always on the strength they can command and the quality of work they may possibly produce with that, undoubtedly every one of them will contribute substantially towards the cause of education and hence towards the uplift of this country.

TYPE NO. 5.—INSTITUTIONS FOR POOR MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS AND YOUTHS

On principle, boys from poor middle-class families should be equipped primarily for improving the economic condition of their families and that with the minimum expenditure of time and energy on their part after education. So in any institution meant solely for them, vocational training should

be more prominent than academic education. Exceptions, of course, should be made for the specially brilliant ones. *An elementary training of the senses and reason, an elementary knowledge of the three R's, a general enlightenment through conversations and discourses together with a sound practical knowledge of one or two vocations* will be found sufficient for the education of most of the mediocre boys.

All the boys, therefore, in an orphanage irrespective of their parts should not be allowed to follow the High School course ; for this will mean indiscreet waste of time, energy and public money. A type of education covering all that have been said to be just sufficient for most of them has to be evolved by experiment at one of our institutions meant solely for poor boys.

Then regarding the vocational training which is to be the principal factor of their education, we should make it a point to consider that our middle-class boys are not usually strong and hardy enough to ply the trade of a carpenter or blacksmith or even that of a weaver. So carpentry, weaving and smithy may be arranged for only those who are physically fit ; but we should note that provision for vocations requiring much less muscular exertion is what is more urgent for the occupational training of average middle-class boys. The trade of a dentist or of an engraver may, for instance, suit many ; specialisation in repair works of various kinds may afford a number of suitable vocations.

Then in these institutions there should be nothing that may possibly depress the poor boys. 'Orphanage,' and such other names should better not be used. Such treatment should be accorded to them that they may never have the occasion to feel that they are charity boys. Charity boys should not on principle be made to collect alms ; this should be as a rule the function of the workers or volunteers from the public. If a number of paying students may be admitted, the educational value of the institution will be found to increase to a degree, for segregation of poor boys in a charitable institution is itself a pressure on the development of manhood.

Poor middle-class youths, who have passed the matriculation examination may reside in institutions of Type 2, which can arrange suitable vocational training for the dull and mediocre ones and higher university education for the brighter ones.

These are some of the types of institutions that have already begun to grow under our Mission for a healthy education of

boys and youths belonging to middle-class and aristocratic families. It has been already stated that in order to economise our strength we should concentrate on improving the quality of each, so that it may become a model of its kind and also turn out some 'real men.' This will beyond doubt help the cause of mass education.

MASS EDUCATION

Besides doing what is necessary for equipping middle-class youths, through the different types of institutions mentioned above, so that they may feel and work for the uplift of the masses according to their power, we should, especially through our village centres, make some direct effort for mass education. Our village centres should as a rule strive to dole out some sort of general education among the masses of the neighbourhood along with food and medicine which they usually distribute. Each of these centres may according to its capacity organise directly or through interested local people measures for utilising at least some of the following agencies for the spread of mass education.

1. Free Primary School—not a simple stereotyped *Pathshala*, but principally an elementary agricultural and industrial school as suggested in the previous article on the topic of vocational training in village schools.
2. Night School—for bare literacy as well as general enlightenment through pictures, charts, conversations and discourses,—mainly intended for those who have to work during the day.
3. Lantern Lectures—on important topics, such as *Religions*—instructive narratives from Puranas and lives of saints and seers, real import of religion, its relation with our principal social customs.
Science—hygiene and sanitation, improved agriculture and agricultural industries including dairy farming, home industries, co-operative organisation, trade and commerce in ancient and modern India, etc.
4. Exhibitions—organised during Utsabs or during Melas in the neighbourhood for giving an impetus to improvement of agriculture as well as handicrafts by awarding prizes. Lantern lectures on these occasions will prove highly beneficial.

5. Free Library.
6. Small Museum—for agricultural, industrial and commercial products, implements, pictorial charts, etc.
7. Demonstration Farms—for demonstrating and explaining improved methods of agriculture and allied industries.

In connection with the two types of schools mentioned above special arrangements for teaching Sanskrit language will surely be found to be highly useful for giving a cultural lift to the masses. Concerning lantern lectures, it may be noted that a new kind of "Kathakata" on the topics mentioned above, illustrated by lantern slides and accompanied by songs as usual, will prove to be an excellent device for general enlightenment of the masses.

The list of different types of institutions is far from being complete. The list contains only those types which have begun to develop under the auspices of our Mission. In view of the unemployment problem it would be highly useful to the country if it could develop, for instance,

- (i) a full-fledged Industrial School (for different varieties of profitable handicrafts) ;
- (ii) a full-fledged Agricultural School (after the Agricultural Institute at Allahabad run by American Christian Missionaries) ;
- (iii) a School of Arts and Crafts (run on the lines of the Lucknow Government School of Arts and Crafts).

These types are immensely useful no doubt, but we have to leave them till enormous funds required for each of them are forthcoming. But it may be observed that the earliest opportunity should be seized to develop a full-fledged Agricultural Institute where the students may get systematic lessons, theoretical as well as practical, on Farm Chemistry, Farm Physics, Botany, Elementary Zoology, Farm Crops and Elementary Economics, Horticulture and Climatology, Animal Husbandry, Elementary Irrigation and Drainage, Farm Machinery and Elementary Surveying.

Although we have suggested incorporation of agricultural and industrial courses in the curricula of our schools, orphanages and hostels, we cannot expect that any one of them will be able to provide for such a comprehensive training in agriculture or to provide for a systematic training in a large number of profitable industries and handicrafts. In most cases these

institutions will do well at present to place their pupils under expert craftsmen in their respective workshops, laboratories or places of trade or to send some of them to existing occupational schools, till we can rear up full-fledged agricultural or industrial schools.

Our survey of the general situation will be incomplete if we do not recognise the gradually awakening self-consciousness of our people in various fields of educational activity, showing unmistakably the signs of an Indian Renaissance. The defects of the present system of education have become obvious to most of our thinkers, and serious attempts for mending them are being made by many. Associations for physical culture and cultural education, schools and colleges for economic efficiency, Brahmacharya Vidyalayas and Gurukulas, organisations for mass education are coming into existence in different parts of our country.

When our people are beginning to feel keenly for sound education, the problem of financing our institutions, of course if they are conducted properly, will every day become easier. What a vast sum of money has been spent by the various Christian Missionary organisations after education in India through hundreds of primary schools, high schools, hostels, colleges and associations! And this has been provided mostly by enlightened charity from the West. We should remember the observation of Swami Vivekananda that our people are no less charitably disposed than Westerners,—only the channels of their munificence require to be diverted towards all that may contribute to a complete rejuvenation of our country. The rising self-consciousness of our people indicates that before long money will not be wanting to work any worthy scheme for the spread of man-making, character-building and life-giving education in India. Meanwhile we should work patiently remembering the motto uttered by our illustrious leader,—“Money does not make man, man makes money.”

(Concluded)

THE ROAD TO THE OCCULT

By E. BARRINGTON (L. ADAMS BECK)

It follows as a natural result of the articles I have been writing on the subject of the occult that I am asked to describe the practical means of acquiring what are known in India as "the powers"—that is to say, the means of using natural force in a manner which, to those unacquainted with this peculiar system of psychology, will seem supernatural.

It is my own opinion that the West, now searching even passionately for a clue to the mysteries of psychology, will do well to listen to the voice of India on the subject.

The great authority, or rather the authority who collected knowledge and opinions on the occult in the second century B.C., is an Indian known by the name of Patanjali, whose "*Yoga Aphorisms*" survive to this day as the foundation-stone of the science of psychology, which in India is named "*Raja Yoga*," or the Royal *Yoga*, the word *Yoga* signifying union or concentration since it is only by union and concentration with or on the forces of nature that results can be achieved.

It must not be thought that Patanjali was the originator of this system. He only collected the experience, already very ancient, of many experimenters.

To begin with, India wholly denies that so-called "miracles," "answers to prayer" and the strange powers of faith are due to any supernatural intervention. She says: "Yes, they happen. They are often imitated, faked, but they happen, and abundantly, only they are never supernatural, for nothing exists in the universe which is not obedient to the law of nature."

India states that belief in the possibility of supernatural interferences with the law inculcates fear, superstition, and therefore cruelty. It belongs to the dark places of the earth and must be cast out by the clear daylight of knowledge.

To understand the mind and its powers, the search-light of the mind itself must be turned *inward* and steadily focused; and, if you come to think of it, that is the one thing which in the West we are never trained to do. Our whole system of education turns our minds to external things—the common branches of learning, observation of the world about us and so

forth. But to concentrate mental observation on the mind itself, to force it to self-analysis, is a thing rarely or never done in the West, where there is not one man in millions who can focus his mind on its own powers and, understanding, use them.

So the goal of this ancient science is concentration on the mind and its powers, and it demands no faith or belief. It demands only the hard discipline and training which would be needed for passing some high and difficult examination where the body, mind and spirit participated in the competition.

Raja Yoga, like Buddhism, is divided into eight steps. As a first step the student is trained and tested by the commands that there must be no slaughter for food and that truthfulness, honesty, continence and the avoidance of luxury must be made the basis of life. Life must be extremely simple, sane and wholesome.

The next step is the practise of extreme cleanliness of mind and body, contentment, renunciation of such practises as stand in the way of concentration, study, and self-surrender to discipline. To a student it must be impossible to injure any human being or animal by word, thought or deed.

It will be noted that these two foundations of the science of psychology are moral, and India declares that without them no man can really attain control. She does not deny that a man may in certain conditions have sporadic visions and flashes of power, but he will not have control, and sooner or later such knowledge as he has acquired without control will turn and rend him and possibly others. Therefore it is a very dangerous thing to adventure in this path without the moral foundation of perfect self-control.

It can be seen, I think, how universally this truth has been recognized by the various religions—which are more or less schools of psychology—in the disciplines they have laid down for their pupils.

Supposing the moral foundations well and truly laid, the next step is posture. Much discipline has to be worked through and a position easy and natural for the body must be found. A man must choose that position in which he can most easily forget his body. For it will be subjected to great changes during this discipline. Nerve currents will find new channels. New vibrations will be felt.

As the main part of these will be along the spinal column, that must be held free by sitting erect and holding the chest,

throat and head in a straight line supported by the ribs. A man sitting slouched, with the chest caved in, cannot concentrate. It requires a certain alertness and awareness.

After posture comes breathing-control. Stopping the right nostril with the thumb, inhale air through the left according to capacity, then without pause expel the air through the right, closing the left. Reverse the process, beginning with stopping the left nostril with the thumb. Practise this with three or five inhalations at four points of the day; before dawn, during midday, in the evening, and at midnight.

This is called the purifying of the nerves. The body must be kept in sound health, for when it is not it obtrudes itself and whines for attention. The thoughts must be as far as possible calmed and concentrated on the aim in view.

It is declared that after the first few months of steady effort one begins to find that the thoughts of people near one appear to one at first in dim and afterwards in clear picture forms. Or by concentrating all the energies upon something at a distance, a clear thought form of it will appear in the mind. Or by concentrating the thoughts (say) on the sense of smell one may perceive a beautiful perfume.

Flashes of such perception will tend to strengthen courage, but it must be remembered they are only marks of progress, and the end is the "freedom of the soul," as it is technically called. We are to remember that body and mind belong to us, but are not ourselves.

It may be said here that the early morning and the evening are the two best times for concentration. They are the hours of calm in nature—a calm reflected in the mind of man unless artificially obstructed. And one should not eat shortly before practising the lessons.

It is most important that all practise should invariably begin with thoughts of peace and good will sent out to all the world—but most especially to those against whom one may feel one has any grudge. There is a strong physical as well as spiritual reason for this, because when the body is disturbed with any ripple of fear or anger it is poisoned. It cannot function in peace. We know that fear can kill, that the angry nursing mother can poison her infant, that no function is normal under such influences and control is never complete.

It was not for mere piety's sake that the Christ exhorted His followers to pray for those "who despitefully use you," but

because He knew that unless this is done the spiritual attitude is hopelessly out of joint for attainment. It really matters very little about prayer, or deliberate thoughts akin to it, for those we love, because every current of our being, every vibration, is unconsciously and incessantly sweeping all good towards them. But the other is really important—in fact no control is possible without it—and with it comes peace.

For oneself, one's thoughts and desires should be always for nothing but knowledge and light. When that frame of mind is attained the goal is in sight.

Now comes a very interesting and compelling stage.

India believes in a something which may be summed up as the Omnipresent and All-penetrating, recognizing it as the quiescent energy which can be and is transmuted into form and force, and she believes also in a power which transforms or manifests this quiescent energy into the forms of the universe we know.

This force manifests itself as what we call thought-force, the nerve-currents of the body, and so down through all gradations to the lowest physical force. Scientifically it is known that the different forms of energy in the universe are interchangeable and indestructible, and their sum total of force is called in India *Prana*. The object of this discipline is to give control of this sum total of force.

Let us suppose—for there are, of course, many gradations in this knowledge—that a man partially understands the means of controlling this universal force. It must be realized that controlling this means controlling everything in the universe according to the degree of attainment. Knowing and understanding it, we know all, in so far as we can receive knowledge.

To acquire this control it has seemed to great Indian minds that any sacrifice was worth while, and this is the goal at which the true *yoga* discipline steadily aims. But I cannot too often insist that in certain conditions and vibrations a quite untrained mind may have a flash of it and its power, and that this is as dangerous as for an ignorant man to play about with uninsulated electric wires.

But in this system we may drill and discipline our own bodies and minds and, acquiring control of the little ripple of universal force which is ourselves, launch outward into the great ocean. Consider at this point how in all countries people are attempting to control this force without understanding its A B C's—healers, hypnotists and many more. Is it not wiser to learn the way?

The simple steps I have already given sound ridiculously inadequate to the aim, but what they give first is control of the muscles, and that is very important in a world where everything is related with everything else.

I used when a child to say that I could not imagine why health had not been made infectious instead of disease. I have learned that, rightly understood, it has. The vibrations of bodies can be transferred to one another for strengthening and healing. And as to personal control, it is told of a modern Indian teacher skilled in this science that when in pain he was able to transfer his consciousness from the seat of pain and suffer no more.

In true faith-healing it is not by rousing faith that the cure is accomplished ; it is by raising the vibrations of the patient into accord with your own highest vibrations. That vibration will be a higher or lower one according to your stage of attainment.

Take some very eloquent educated speaker on religion and he fills his church or hall and there it ends. Take a certain camel-driver in Arabia, Mohammed, and the consuming force in him became a sword that armed millions and may yet drench the world in blood and tears. Take Nelson with such a whirling force in his frail little body that when he looked a man in the face "The spirit of Nelson was on him and each was Nelson that day," and his name is immortally one with Victory. Or take Napoleon, the shabby Corsican with eyes whose fire none could face unmoved.

We call this genius, and wonder at its mysteries, but need not. It is *Prana*, the universal force, sometimes possessing, sometimes controlled by a man, sometimes consciously, wisely and helpfully, sometimes unconsciously and perilously, but always force irresistible.

But through discipline and meditation lies the only way of attainment. Is it realized how little any of us use our minds and think at all? We watch a series of outside pictures imperfectly presented to our minds and there our mental life begins and ends. With such a passive attitude nothing can be achieved.

Now comes a state which can only be believed through experiment. For the description may be symbolic or a parable, but the result is there.

It is taught in India that along the spinal column is a nerve-current on either side and a canal running through the spinal cord. At the base of this canal is a storage of nerve-power which must be roused into action by the above discipline and which, when roused, like a mounting tide attempts to ascend the canal

running through the spinal cord. As the tide of nerve-power rises, layer after layer of mental power is opened up until, when it reaches the brain, the inner, the true self becomes detached from the bonds of the mind and the body and acquires control of both.

It is taught that only those who are skilled in the discipline can open this canal in the spinal column, but that the nerve currents on either side act in all, though uncontrolled. The opening of this canal for the transmission of power is perhaps the most important stage in the discipline. The way to it is by regulated breathing, steadily practised.

The power of perfect rhythm is being very gradually realized in the West. In Asia the very workman turns his blow or stroke or pull into pure rhythm, using generally some sacred word as the beat. So in the practise of *yoga* it is usual to time and make rhythmic the breathing—as taught above—by using some sacred word as the beat. The one generally used is “AUM,” the ancient word which represents the Trinity, and this word flows in and out harmoniously with the breath until both become automatic.

This applies especially to the second lesson in breathing, where measured breaths are taken, using the nostrils alternately, filling the lungs through each nostril in turn and exhaling the air through the other. It is claimed that the use of this exercise over a considerable time will result in such calming and rhythmic influences throughout the body that harsh lines disappear from the face and the tone of the voice assumes new beauty.

And after this comes another stage. As you fill the left nostril with air, stopping the right nostril with the thumb, concentrate the mind on the nerve-current it produces. Then close both nostrils with the thumb and forefinger and believe that you are sending the nerve-current down the spinal column and striking on the store of force at its base. Hold it there awhile. Believe then that you are slowly drawing out that nerve current with the breath, and taking the thumb off the right nostril, expel the breath. Do the same, beginning with inhalation through the left nostril.

Unused as we are to full breathing in the West, this should only be begun with four seconds' inhalation, or less, retaining the air for sixteen seconds and expelling it in eight. Think always of the force at the base of the spinal column while you do this breathing. Four times in the morning and four times in the evening are enough for the beginner, and the exercise must be very slowly increased.

It is taught that with this discipline all the sexual forces can be transmuted into purest energy and that this is why in all the faiths chastity has been proposed as a most exalted virtue—a circumstance otherwise difficult of explanation in some respects. This accounts for the fact that every faith—or psychological school—has instituted a monastic discipline, sometimes without clearly explaining or itself understanding the reasons for its actions. It is simply that under a recognized rule of men or women vowed to celibacy, there may very likely appear—as has often happened—the great psychological expert, from the fact that the sexual force is directed to the subconscious* rather than in the usual channel.

Then comes the next stage. The mind must be freed from being controlled by the representations of the senses. Nothing can be achieved without this. The mind leaps about from thought to thought like a monkey in the boughs of a tree. It cannot fix or concentrate. It spills over on everything. You cannot hold it to one thought, for, slippery as an eel, it escapes you and is gone.

You must unharness it from the hastily running pictures of the senses and by practise quiet it and reduce the waves to ripples and the ripples to a mirroring calm. At this stage becomes possible the deep calm of concentrated meditation which in Asia is called "the one-pointed state of mind," when the mind, conscious of its grip that nothing can relax, clenches itself on to some chosen object, turns it inside out, sees it through and through and absorbs it into perfect union.

And in this attainment the next step is to reharness the mind to far other things than the sense impressions. Fix your mind, for practise, on some point in the body and imagine the body and mind as filled with light. It is good to focus on light, for that supports the imagination in several obvious ways.

At this stage sounds will be heard like music, seeds of light may be seen floating in the air. And so, by this focusing and concentrating, every part of the body can be gradually brought under control. Men skilled in the discipline can bring the very heart-beat under perfect control. And when all these things are attained, and the body is an obedient slave and no longer master, comes the attainment of the higher consciousness which is called *samadhi*.

India teaches that beyond reason, beyond all mental powers

* Not subconscious, but *superconscious*.—Ed.

is a state of consciousness in which the highest wisdom and power are attainable.

As I have said before, a man may stumble sometimes into this state. He will then believe that what he has learned is an inspiration from outside himself or a divine intervention, and will probably surround his knowledge with hallucinations, explaining it by such knowledge as he has hitherto possessed.

Take the case of Mohammed. He rose into this higher consciousness, untrained, undisciplined. He reports that the Angel Gabriel set him on the heavenly horse Borak and he visited the heavens. Yet that man beheld wonders of truth and in the Quran truth and superstition are distractingly blended. So with many other famous instances.

But in *Yoga* all the different stages, physical, mental, spiritual, meditative and so forth, lead scientifically and in gradual development to this state of higher consciousness in which the force and knowledge of the universe are open to a man as a treasury from which he may help himself according to his capacity.

It is impossible that in a brief article like this I should do more than sketch the hasty outlines of a vast subject. I should say much more on meditation, its subjects and objects, on the patience necessary, the strict rule, and much else. For some the way is much easier and simpler than for others. I suppose that is conditioned by the state of evolution already reached. For all round us are souls in different degrees of evolution and the battle there, as always, is to the strong.

I will give a short Indian parable which expresses the instant union that may befall some, for it has a general application.

A great *Yogi* passed through a forest and by a man who had been sitting there long absorbed in discipline and meditation, and this devotee asked, "When shall I attain full knowledge?" The *Yogi* replied, "In four more births," and the man wept in despair. "So long yet! So little done!"

He passed another who asked the same question. He answered: "As many leaves as you see on this tree, so many births await you before you receive full knowledge." A flood of joy transfigured the questioner's face. "So soon? And I who have done so little!" And even as those words passed his lips he received full knowledge and enlightenment, for he had perceived the truth that time is nothing in the attainment of wisdom.

I feel I have said little and there is so much which should be said. This austere Indian wisdom sounds very strange in the clash and hurry of modern life. And when I give the following description of the true disciple of psychological science it is like a lost music, exquisite but out of reach.

Abiding alone in a secret place, without craving or without possessions, he shall take his seat on a firm seat, and, with the working of the mind and senses held in check, so let him meditate and thereby reach the Peace. He who knows the boundless joy that lies beyond the senses and is grasped by intuition, he who swerves not from the truth, is as a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker.

Yet it is attainable, and to those who have attained even a step, which of earth's prizes can seem worth a moment's consideration?

As men do children at their games behold,
And smile to see them, though unmoved and cold,
Smile at the recollected joys, and then
Depart and mix in the affairs of men—

so are those who have attained a little knowledge of the psychological prizes awaiting the seeker.

Yes, these are truly the affairs of men. The world and its societies have been formed from chaos by men who have seen these things, have entered into realization of them, and so swayed the minds of the peoples into some faint responsive harmony with their vision. What right have persons to speak on the subject of true psychology who have not studied along the lines of those who have attained and have wielded the powers which have transmuted the world?

It is a great and possible power to heal the sick, to walk on the water, to penetrate the thoughts of others, to transport oneself through space, and all these and many more are there for the taking if one will but learn ; but these are little things beside the power of transmuting the thoughts of other men into an energy that shall possess the world with the realization of the universe as it truly is and of their place in it. And it is only along the path so poorly indicated in these pages that this has been done, for this path has been trodden consciously or unconsciously by all the great seers.

And what interest can compare with it? Here is a source of energy almost untapped which connects with every form of force, physical, mental and spiritual, which exists. I wish

I had more space to explain more clearly and more fully what I know, for these are the things at which the West is blindly aiming through spiritualism, hypnotism and what not.

Let it be steadily remembered that the physical control, though long and arduous, is only the gateway leading to mental control, which in turn leads to the spiritual control, subconscious or otherwise, of oneself and that which is also oneself—the world or universal force.*

NEWS AND REPORTS

Bankura Famine Relief—An Appeal

A terrible famine has broken out in Bankura, Bengal. Scarcity of drinking water and the scorching heat of the summer have aggravated the misery of the people. The inhabitants of Bankura are proverbially poor. Their sufferings are hardly known to the wealthy citizens of big towns.

The Ramakrishna Mission has opened relief centres there. But our work has been greatly handicapped for want of suitable funds. The cry of distress is everywhere. But our area of activity cannot be extended with the limited funds at our disposal. Therefore our appeal goes, in the name of our suffering countrymen to the generous public to help us in the relief measures taken to save the famine-stricken people from discord, starvation and a painful lingering death.

All contributions may be sent to any of the following addresses which, however small, will be gratefully accepted and duly acknowledged.

The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, (Howrah); Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar or Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

Vedanta Society, Portland

We have received a report of the Society's activities during the last year, from which we extract the following. The reporter writes :— Society writes :—

While our membership has not fallen off, it has shifted somewhat. In September the location of the Center was changed. The new chapel is nearer the heart of the downtown section of the city. Since entering the new location the attendance of all the public lectures has shown a marked increase. The Sunday evening lectures specially being nearly always given to comfortably filled house.

During the year under review besides giving lectures on Vedanta on various subjects, Swami Prabhavananda has given series of lectures

* From *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*, New York.

on the following : 1. Buddhism ; 2. The Philosophy of the Upanishads ; 3. World Teachers ; and 4. Yoga and Mysticism.

The series of lectures on Buddhism was given early in the year to small but interested audiences. It covered the life of Buddha, his teachings and the influence of his philosophy. In many ways the group of discourses dealing with the philosophy of the Upanishads was one of the greatest studies ever given in this city. The full course was open to the public, affording perhaps the greatest opportunity ever offered in this part of the west, to come in touch with the highest philosophy. The group of lectures upon the World Teachers was perhaps, the most popular course Swami has offered. This series too was open to the public, and covered the lives and teachings of Krishna, LaoTze, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ and Ramakrishna. With the series dealing with Yoga and Mysticism, the Swami closed the year's work. It was so arranged that the lectures covered the regular Sunday services and the two week day classes, for the latter part of the month of February. It was an intensely interesting course of lessons and lectures. The Society made a special effort to advertise the series. Much interest and enthusiasm was aroused and a number of applications for membership were made.

In the regular class work, the study of the Gita was finished. The lessons in Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms and lessons from the Bible are being continued. The first Friday night of each month is question night, with the public invited. Much interest has been aroused in these meetings by the Swami's interesting method of conducting them. Instead of writing out the question: as formerly, each person states verbally his enquiry. Sometimes the Swami will answer directly, then again he will call upon the students in turn to state their views. Thus opinions are expressed and viewpoints clarified; while at the close of each discussion, Swami never fails to give a satisfactory summary.

During the month of October Swami Prabhavananda, at the urgent request of friends living in St. Louis, Missouri, spent two weeks in that city lecturing with great success to large and enthusiastic audiences. A permanent interest was created through these lectures and a center established. Swami Akhilananda is expected to take charge of the center in a short time. During Swami Prabhavananda's absence in the east the activities of the Portland Center were continued in charge of the students.

Since Christmas day fell upon a Sunday this year, it was fittingly observed with special devotional services at the regular Sunday morning service hour. In the evening the Swami gave a masterly discourse on "Jesus, a World Teacher." To many of the students and friends this was one of the best lectures Swami Prabhavananda has delivered in Portland.

The Society also celebrated the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य ब्रह्मनिबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FIFTH LESSON

Pratyahara and Dharana : Krishna says, "All who seek me by whatever means will reach me." "All must reach me." Pratyahara is 'gathering toward,' an attempt to get hold of the mind and focus it on the desired object. The first step is to let the mind drift. Watch it, see what it thinks. When you look closely at a thought, it will stop. But do not try to stop the thoughts, be only the witness. The mind is not the soul or spirit. It is only matter in a finer form, and we own it and can learn to manipulate it through the nervous energies.

Body is the objective view of what we call mind. We, the Self, are beyond both body and mind ; we are "Atman," the eternal, unchangeable witness. The body is crystallized thought.

When the breath flows through the left nostril, then it is the time for rest ; when it flows through the right, then it is the time for work ; and when it flows through both, then it is the time for meditation. When we are calm and breathe equally through both nostrils, we are in the right condition for quiet meditation. It is no use trying to concentrate at first. Control of thought will come of itself.

At first we close the nostrils with our fingers. After sufficient practice, however, we shall be able to close them by the power of will, through thought, alone.

Pranayama is now to be slightly changed. If the student has received a *Mantram*, he must use that instead of "Om" during inhalation and exhalation, and use the word "Hum" (pronounced *Hoom*) during the Kumbhaka. Throw the restrained breath forcibly down on the head of the Kundalini at each repetition of the word Hum and imagine that this awakens her.

Identify yourself only with God. Gradually, we shall begin to feel the coming of thoughts even before they have taken form, and we shall learn the way they begin and be aware of what we are going to think, just as on this plane we can look out and see a person coming. This stage is reached when we have learned to separate ourselves from our minds and see ourselves and thoughts as separate things. Do not let the thoughts grasp you ; stand aside and they will die away.

. . . . Follow these holy thoughts ; go with them and when they melt away you will find the feet of the Omnipotent God. This is the superconscious state ; when the idea melts, follow it and melt with it.

Halos are symbols of inner light and can be seen by the Yogi. Sometimes we may see a face as if surrounded by flames, and in them we may unerringly read a man's character. Sometimes our Ishtam may come to us as a vision ; and that symbol will be the one upon which we can rest easily and fully concentrate our minds.

We can imagine through all the senses, but we do so mostly through the eyes. Even imagination is half material. In other words, we cannot think without images. But as animals appear to think, yet have no words, it is probable that there is no inseparable connection between thought and image.

Try to keep the imagination in Yoga, being careful to keep it pure and holy. We all have our peculiarities in the way of imaginative power ; follow the way most natural to you ; it will be the easiest.

We are the results of all reincarnations of Karma. "One lamp lighted from another," says the Buddhist. Different lamps, but the same light.

Be cheerful, be brave, bathe daily, have patience, purity and perseverance, then you will become a Yogi in truth. Never try to hurry, and, if the higher powers come, remember that they are but side paths. Do not let them tempt you from the

main road. Put them aside and hold fast to your only true aim—God. Seek only the Eternal, finding which we are at rest for ever ; having the All, nothing is left to strive for and we are for ever in free and perfect existence. Existence absolute, Knowledge absolute, Bliss absolute.

WHITHER, INDIA ?

BY THE EDITOR

We do not know, but perhaps one of the ways of earning the esteem of a people is to oppress it, dominate and cow it to slavish submission. The mentality of a certain section of our people is otherwise difficult to explain. India is a strange country in many respects, but its strangest feature is perhaps a class of nationalists who affect *khaddar* dresses but think and act in Western ways. To these gentlemen, nothing Indian is good enough and everything Western is perfect. They have a singular contempt for the cherished ideals of the nation and would fain demolish them if they could. Yet their nationalism must be above suspicion, for some of them occupy foremost positions in the extreme nationalist organisations.

This is perhaps the worst effect of political subjection—the conquest of mind and undermining of national ideals. The West has accomplished this somewhat in India ; and this effect has become more pronounced since the world-war. When the war broke out, we exclaimed : “Behold the fall of material civilisation ! The Western civilisation has proved its hollowness,—it must change its outlook and seek for other foundations.” And we hoped in our inmost heart that now the Oriental spiritual ideals would prevail over the whole world. The war raged, it came to an end ; but the triumph of the Orient was nowhere. The belligerents put their houses in order. Some of the powers came much better off from the war, with inflated prosperity and extended dominions, more aggressive and insolent than ever before. And thus it is found that the Western civilisation is all right, for nothing succeeds like success. Nor is that all. Though during the war and immediately after it there was much searching of heart among some Western thinkers, the majority of the Western people were quite content with the existing state of things. Before the war the Western philosophy of life was not so shameless as it is

now. Before, the ideals of peace and spirituality were held in at least some esteem by them. After the war, that esteem seems to have almost entirely gone. Those which were considered as defects of their civilisation, worthy to be remedied, are now looked upon as inevitable and essential to life and existence itself and therefore not to be ashamed of or worried over. There are no better things. The ideals of spiritual perfections are but idle dreams of the effete,—they are never realisable, and aspirations after them but take away from the zest and vigour of life. There is no finality in life, no definite eternal end to be reached. Progress, infinite progress is the aim. Progress towards what? Towards nothing in particular evidently. But let there be enough of 'life,' of vital activity and enjoyment. Such indeed is the predominant Western outlook at the present time.

We do not forget the many fine people in the West, to know whom is a joy and benefit. We know there are better features in the West. Who can deny its tremendous social activity, its philanthropy, its scientific achievements, its untiring and dauntless conquest of the external nature, its intellectual idealism? We are not oblivious of all these. But we do think that with all these, the predominant note of the Western civilisation is what we have described in the preceding paragraph. The good features are struggling for predominance but not with appreciable success yet. Especially, the Western civilisation which dominate the world is nothing better than we have estimated, whatever it may be esoterically and at home. This civilisation is out for conquest with unparalleled wicked zeal. Miss Mayo's crusade against India is only the longest flame of that scorching aggression. The message of Miss Mayo and Co. is this: "Lo, your spirituality has availed little. You are physically, mentally and morally decrepit. Try after physical prosperity and material efficiency. Follow the West and for ever sit at its feet." They are conscious of their weakness. They know that if they were to launch a direct attack on our spirituality, they would be easily worsted in the battle, for they know little of spiritual secrets compared with India. They were also clever enough to know that if they were to accuse us of material inefficiency, much of the blame will recoil upon themselves, it being largely due to Western exploitation. They therefore took the middle and the safe course and assailed our sexual morality. This is the theme of all the Western calumniators of India at the present day,—the burden of their song of hate. They know that if they can prove us sexually

degenerate, they will thereby prove also our spiritual hollowness,—even they are not unconscious of the essential relationship between sexual morality and spirituality. We know the main contention of Miss Mayo ; we need not repeat it here. Another American Miss, Margaret Wilson, has lately come out with another attack on Indian morality in her *Daughters of India*, dilating on our sexual degeneracy. Here are some samples : “Women in that village,” observes Miss Wilson, “were not interested in the mention of possible exotic and alluring sins which charm Western *dilettanti*. There was nothing left exotic to them.” Again, in lamenting the early marriages of pupils at her girls’ school, she reflects “that her cooped-up, veiled, enervated little pupils were less ready physically for motherhood than the average tomboy of an English or American thirteen-year-old. Emotionally to be sure they were more ready, since the ultimate functioning of their bodies had been kept in their minds every minute of their life from infancy upwards.” Then there is our well-known ‘friend’, Edward Thompson, who has recently come out with another Indian book named *Suttee*, in which he dilates on “the sex-obsession of the Hindu civilisation.” All these from people who are themselves over-sexed, who consume sex-books and sex-novels by millions, in whose countries sex-topics form an usual social talk, not to mention the revelations of persons like Judge Lindsey ! The fact is, as we pointed out in our January article, the Western civilisation, itself brought down to a low level, is now seeking to convert the whole world to its view-point. And it is sad to note that this insidious aggression is already telling on the Indian mind. A Miss Mayo’s crusade would mean little if *we* remain unconquered. International opinion is a very volatile thing and scarcely disinterested. It will change the moment we assert ourselves, however differently from the West. Only let us be powerful, and power always has a knack of drawing the homage of men, black or white. But alas, the infatuation for the West is daily adding to our weakness.

If we closely study the mind of the West-infatuated Indians, we do not find in it much that is constructive. A sort of wild impatience of everything Indian is all that is prominent in them. Destroy everything Indian—that is apparently their slogan. One asked us to come out of our “Asiatic barbarism”. And combined with that is of course their impatience of the British domination of India, which is undoubtedly quite genuine and praiseworthy. And there is also another thing,—the idea of the imitation of the West. But this last item does not seem

to have been clearly thought about. Certain Western *isms* are quite in vogue at present, especially communism. But what is the worth of these commodities, what value and position they have in the Western life itself, how long they will endure and how far they can be adapted in India, to all these they do not seem to have given careful thought. If wild declamations could accomplish things, India would have become a part of the West by this time.

Not that they have not their arguments. Some of them say that the difference between the East and the West is fictitious, it exists nowhere except in the imagination of certain people. Others say that the East and the West are terms which have only geographical validity, and that the mind is not a geographical entity. This is a very generous sentiment indeed. But if it be so, why are they always dreaming of the West? Since there is no difference between the East and the West, no difference of outlook, why ask India to *imitate* the West and not simply to accelerate her progress till it is able to meet all situations squarely? No, this is not a distinction without difference. For even these ultra-moderns will admit that there is such a thing as national dignity and self-respect which is a most precious possession of a people and cannot survive too much proneness to foreign imitation. An individual or a nation which has to live by imitation is a fourth-rate being, feeble and despicable. We know we have to accept much from the West in things material. But that would not be dangerous, if we also can give the West something in return, if we also are unique in the possession of things which other nations lack and must have. The Indian Occidentalists do not believe in this uniqueness of India. They also seem to think that whatever is Western is universal in form and import. This is extremely unhistorical and unpsychological and stupid. If Westernism were a synonym of universalism, India might swallow without salt all the imports from the West. Fortunately it is not so.

But is it true that there is no difference of outlook between nations? Are they all moulded after the same pattern? Unity in variety is the plan of nature and national temperaments are no exception. Truth and Reality have diverse aspects and various approaches to them. They are finding variegated expressions in the different races of the world. Even if there were no variety at the origin, the histories of the different races have surely given special moulds to their souls and temperaments, and a century or two now cannot undo the effects of the

preceding millenniums. Whatever might be the reason of it, the difference does exist and necessitates faithful allegiance to and proper understanding of the past and the working of the present and the building up of the future in the light of its achievements. No, it is not true that there is no real difference between India and the West. There is a substantial difference and we must take note of it in all our plannings and preachings.

We find one peculiarity. The gentlemen who are generous enough to wipe out all differences between India and the West, are all of them quite innocent of the true nationalism of India. The one unique thing which is the central impulse of India's life-movement, is spirituality. These gentlemen however do not think much of it. They look about, see the fellow members of their hybrid society and declare that India's spirituality is a fiction. They do not take any practical interest in it. Perchance they study the Sanskrit literature and Hindu philosophical and religious books, and there it ends. They conveniently forget that spirituality cannot be acquired or even *understood* through book-learning. Spirituality requires life-long *practical* application, renunciation of worldly desires and purification of the heart. Can people who indulge in sense-pleasures, who are caught in the meshes of name and fame and whose heart ever gravitates towards the world, ever catch even a glimpse of spirituality? Let them practise and then look about and see if there is not much spirituality in India. But as we have stated, they do not care to practise spirituality. Therefore they neither understand it nor find it in India ; and their nationalism, devoid of its essence, is a feeble and deficient thing eagerly supplicating the help of the Western culture to fulfil and invigorate it.

There is another class of gentlemen, who believe that the only difference between India and the West is that India has stuck to medievalism whereas the West has progressed far towards what is called modernism and got rid of characteristic medieval ideas. Therefore what, according to them, India has to do is to go ahead and overtake the West,—therein lies its salvation. These gentlemen are some of them learned people. When we speak of India's spirituality and India's attempts at the spiritualisation of life and activity, they laugh derisively and tell us how medieval Europe tried all these and found them nonsensical. Surely they know their books. But do they not find any difference between the spiritual understanding of 'medieval' India and medieval Europe? Has not India's spiritual understanding been always infinitely more rational

than the West's and does not that make a tremendous difference? India's great secret is what is known as *Karma Yoga*. It is through *Karma Yoga*, combined with *Bhakti* and *Jnana Yoga* that India has always sought to transform for each individual his life and avocations. *Karma Yoga* is the very acme of philosophical and religious wisdom. It offers infinite scope and full freedom for various achievements, material and mental, and yet does not allow man to be faithless to his spiritual ideals and be entangled in the fatal meshes of phenomena. A more wonderful combination of the absolute freedom for development and spirituality the world has not yet conceived. This *Karma Yoga*, we assert, is a unique achievement of India. No other country has known or understood it to the extent that India has done. It is thus incorrect to say that medieval Europe has really tried the spiritual ideals for which India stands and found them ineffective. Medieval Europe's conception of religion and spirituality was not properly philosophical and scientific, but mainly theological. Had it been rational enough, it would not have succumbed to so-called modernism in the way it did. We must not be understood to mean that the spirituality of medieval Europe was hollow. We think medieval Europe had great achievements to its credit, the value of which has not yet been properly appreciated in the West. Medievalism has come to be synonymous with ignorance and superstition in the popular mind. That is probably because the West has always a tendency to run to extremes. A sane balanced attitude however has begun to grow and many are looking back to medieval ideas for light in the darkness of the present age. And that is what should be. For the salvation of the West lies in welcoming spiritual ideals back into its individual and collective life, not of course in stereotyped and theological but in sternly philosophical and scientific forms.

It is strange that one dangerous conclusion that directly follows from the idea that India is only another medieval Europe, does not occur to our gentlemen. It must be admitted that the Indian civilisation is more ancient than the Western. That means that India has been given more time to perfect its civilisation than the West. Yet the Western civilisation is according to them much ahead of the Indian. It follows therefore that Indians as a people are intrinsically inferior to the Westerners. Do our critics mean to stamp this brand of inferiority on the Indian nation? Do they really and seriously believe in this? Is this their message to the struggling nation? This inferiority-complex, this tendency to see nothing great in

one's own, is alas, one of the most sad and pernicious effects of Western domination.

It is the protagonists of this school that are crying themselves hoarse against the religious bent of the Indian mind. We have referred to them before, to their contempt for Indian greatness and fondness for Western *isms*. Lately, one of them, who occupies a responsible position in the largest political party in India, thus delivered himself in a Bombay meeting. The speaker did not believe in India having any special mission in the world. He added :

"Then there is a good deal of talk about difference between the East and the West. I confess I fail to see it. China and India differ in their habits, customs and outlook from each other as much as they differ from any Western countries. . . . There is difference between Europe and Asia to-day because Europe is industrialised and Asia is not. Europe of the middle ages was much the same as Asia of the middle ages.

"And I see no particular reason to pride ourselves on our peculiarities, angularities and insularities. I always feel irritated when anybody talks of our immortal past. I am not unconscious of the greatness of our past. But when I study our later history and survey our present condition, I see very little of the chosen people about us. Much is said about the superiority of our religion, art, music and philosophy. But what are they to-day? Your religion has become a thing of the kitchen, as to what you can eat and what you cannot eat, as to whom you can touch and whom you cannot touch, whom you could see and whom not.

"What is our music? Our national music is nothing more than an infernal din and painful noises, which are a nuisance on our roads. . . . What is our art? What is the thing which is beautiful in the homes of our countrymen? . . . What is India's national literature? . . . Indian civilisation to-day is stagnant."

The speaker does not stand alone in his opinions. He has his fellows who are all trying to overhaul Mother India. Noble task. And certainly courageous. One of the items of their programme is that India should be freed from the grip of religion. When they say that politics should be separated from religion, they are intelligible as meaning that politics should not be guided by religious opinions, by theology. In this sense, it is quite true that not only politics, but also economics, social customs and rules, etc. should be freed from their theological bias and made absolutely scientific. Long ago, speaking of the caste system, Swami Vivekananda stated that it has no relation with religion, that it was a purely socio-economic institution and that confusing it with religion is a mistake of which many social reformers from Buddha down to Ram Mohun Roy had been guilty. In fact when we look at our socio-economic and

political life from this point of view, we find them to have been scarcely embarrassed by religion proper. Our leaders also often make the mistake of thinking that because books regulating socio-economic life are written in Sanskrit and are ascribed to *rishis*, therefore they are religious. The real Hindu religious books are quite clear about the difference between the *Srutis* and especially, Vedanta, and the *Smritis*. And successive religious teachers have often pointed out that religion has nothing to do with formal obedience to the rules of the *Smritis*. No doubt this confusion exists to a certain extent in the popular mind also. But blind and almost religious faith in the established rules is a characteristic, not of the Indian masses only, but of the mass mind in every land. Cannot our leaders at least get rid of this confusion and cease to talk of the *Smritis* as religious books?

Anyhow, it is extremely desirable that politics, etc., should be separated from theology. But they must never be separated from real religion. Real religion must permeate every sphere of life as far as possible and practicable. Of course religion should be conceived in its most rational and universal form. The aim should not be an attack against religion, but the emancipation and proper development of the so-called secular aspects of life. In their enthusiasm for the separation of 'religion' and politics, they forget this true aim and inveigh against religion itself. Politics, etc., may be separated from so-called religion and yet religion may fulfil all these and occupy the highest place in the scheme of national life, if only we conceive religion in its true impersonal and universal form. Such a religion can never impede the progress of men, on the other hand, advances it. But it must never be understood that religion is to endure through sufferance. Even if religion were to impede the material progress of the country, we would insist on its occupying the paramount position in the national aspirations and activities; for India must bear witness, as it has ever done in the past, to the fact that the spirit is the real man and its realisation the highest and only end of life.

Another eminent Indian lately expressed the view that religion was impeding the progress of India. It is reported that in an address to an Indian assembly, he "strongly appealed for moderation in religion. He expressed the opinion that the sooner India came into line with the West, the better it would be for all. He pointed to Turkey's abolition of the Khilafat and to Japan, Russia and Mexico, which had struggled against religion and advanced without any religious influence. He concluded

by saying that the condition of progress was to give less and less importance to religion and thereby remove the communal trouble and bring increasing prosperity and progress for India." Here also, it will be seen that the real contention should be against the theological bias in secular life. But the speaker's underlying desire is to dethrone religion from its true position. It is this unnecessary aggression, against which we strongly protest. The speaker wants India to fall into a line with the West. But with whom will the West fall into a line? Is it considered that the West has perfected itself? It is only to the slavish spirit of a section of Indians who cannot rise to the height of endeavour and idealism that their fathers required of them, that the West appears so,—to those who have forgotten the achievements of their forefathers, the glory of their motherland and the supreme value of their spiritual ideals. The West is drifting. It has yet to discover the true view of life. It also requires an ideal and that ideal it has not yet determined. The tremendous material achievements of the West have a stupefying effect on the minds of some Indians, of which the above exhortations are the result. India should be warned of these secret enemies.

No man can live without an ideal. Most men are satisfied with moderate ideals. But no civilised nation which has learnt to enquire after the First Cause, can live long without a spiritual ideal to strive after. This ideal pursues it relentlessly until it entirely surrenders itself to God. The West is pursued by the Hound of Heaven, and it can know no peace until it has surrendered. India surrendered itself immemorial ages ago to God. And to-day we are asked to give up the spiritual ideals and be content with mere prosperity! India is really in a crisis now. Our material poverty was itself a sufficient cause of doubt and vacillation. Then came Western aggression and contempt of our culture. And now our own people are against our ideals. It is now that we require tremendous faith and patience. But let India shed all doubt and fear. For the God of India shall see India triumph. That day of glory is not far off. We shall rise in all our glory. We shall again assert our ideals and deluge the world with our spiritual ideas. We shall triumph not only spiritually and culturally, but also materially, and that through the life-giving, strengthening power of religion. Let us hold fast to religion as our salvation and it will redeem us.

It is said sometimes that we must not talk of higher things till we have emancipated ourselves materially. Nothing can be

more fallacious. No nation on earth ever progressed in such leisurely and routine-work fashion. When a nation revives, it flourishes in all spheres of its life. It cannot stop the flow of vigour to certain spheres arbitrarily. If India gains strength, it will be strong in all aspects, material, mental and spiritual, nationally and internationally. All activities should be simultaneous ; but the greatest effort should be towards the acquisition of strength. And what can be a greater source of strength than religion, 'even a little of which banishes great fear'? It is religion which has been the greatest stimulant to progress in all the past ages of India and it will be always so. So we must emphasise religion above all in our present crisis. Secondly, even if we are to achieve material prosperity first, it is absolutely necessary that the nation should be united. The masses should be roused up and the greatest enthusiasm evoked in their heart. How can we do that? What will be the battle-cry that will bring the nation together? What is that *mantram* that will make the three hundred million hearts beat in unison? The Bolshevik ideal? The lure of material prosperity? The hatred of Indian ideals? The hatred of the British? We do not hear our 'leaders' speak anything of this secret of unity. We shall tell them that secret. *It is religion.* Mahatma Gandhi stood for religion, therefore he was able to invoke that tremendous enthusiasm in the heart of the Indian people. Let us warn our 'leaders' that this is the only way to unite the people and make them strong, and any serious interference with true religion will neither help them nor the people. It is a vain hope to find any other basis of national unity than spirituality. The sooner we recognise this, the better for all.

We cannot repress our smile at the audacious ambition of certain people to banish religion from India. What do they think? Do they fancy that the Lord has left India to their mercy to do whatever they like with it? Do they hope that the Ganges should go back to its source and flow along a new channel? Even if that were possible, it would be impossible for this country to give up its characteristic course of religious life and take up for itself a new career of politics or something else. Let us recognise this central fact of Indian national life and not waste our energies and break our heads against adamant walls. History has chalked out the future for us ; we can but follow it faithfully. This is the path of least resistance for us. Religion is our vitality. The moment we shall succeed in destroying religion, that moment we shall die.

We want other kinds of leaders than these Occidentalists.

We want those who are imbued with the true spiritual idealism of India, who will strive for India's material prosperity, but not by trampling on its highest ideals, who will ever point towards the high goal towards which India must ever travel through sunshine and rain and unflinchingly, who will not be irritated to hear of India's high achievements and mission but will allow their light to ever illumine and purify their desires and aspirations, who will not in their ignorance rush into places where angels fear to tread, who will *practise* spirituality and will not merely profess it, who will not deny the eternal but will consider themselves its instrument, and who will represent in their thought and activity the highest synthesis of life and reality. Such alone can truly lead and not quarrellous demagogues. We say it deliberately that we expect them to come out of Bengal, the province where this synthetic ideal exists in its most articulate and comprehensive forms. Let them rise and not become pawns in the hands of factious political forces ; but let their vision transcend all narrow limits and India will follow them faithfully.

"The Indian nation cannot be killed. Deathless it stands and it will stand so long as that spirit shall remain as the background, so long as her people do not give up their spirituality. Beggars they may remain, poor and poverty-stricken, dirt and squalor may surround them perhaps throughout all time, but let them not give up their God, let them not forget that they are the children of the sages."

"The Lord of Lords is not to be attained by much frothy speech. The Lord of Lords is not to be attained even by the powers of the intellect. He is not gained by much power of conquest. That man who knows the secret source of things and that everything else is evanescent, unto him He, the Lord, comes ; unto none else. India has learned her lesson through ages of experience. She has turned her face towards Him. She had made many mistakes ; loads and loads of rubbish are heaped upon the race. Never mind ; what of that ? What is the clearing of rubbish, the cleaning of cities, and all that ? Does that give life ? Those that have fine institutions, they die. And what of institutions, these tin-plate Western institutions, made in five days and broken on the sixth ? One of these little handful nations cannot keep alive for two centuries together. And our institutions have stood the test of ages. Says the Hindu : 'Yes, we have buried all the old nations of the earth and stand here to bury all the new races also, because our ideal is not this world, but the other. Just as your ideal is, so shall

you be. If your ideal is mortal, if your ideal is of this earth, so shalt thou be. If your ideal is matter, matter shalt thou be. Behold! our ideal is the Spirit. That alone exists. Nothing else exists, and like Him, we live for ever.'” (Swami Vivekananda)

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

(Continued from the May issue)

It was in the month of *Aswin*, 1319. In the afternoon two ladies came to visit Mother. They were, as I learnt, disciples of Shivanarayan Paramahansa of Kalighat. One of them said to Mother: “I want to put a question to you.”

“Yes, do,” replied Mother.

“Is there any truth in image-worship? Our Guru says that image-worship is useless and that we should worship the sun and fire.”

“Since your Guru says so, you should not ask me further. You should have faith in your Guru.”

But the ladies insisted again and again. Mother said: “If your teacher had been omniscient,—just see the consequence of your insistence,—I have to speak out—he would not have said so. From times immemorial, men have been realising spiritual freedom through image-worship.—Is that all nothing? Our Master had not such narrow sectarian views. The Brahman is in everything. But you should know that the sages come into the world to show the way to mankind, and each of them speaks in his own way. There are many ways, therefore all their teachings are true. It is as if many birds of white, black, red, or various other hues are singing on the same tree ;—though their songs have each a different note, they are all songs of birds ; it is not that one of them alone is bird’s song and all others are nothing.”

The ladies argued with Mother for some time and then desisted, and at last departed, expressing the desire to visit here again.

Mother had returned from Benares. When I went on the 18th *Magh*, 1319, to see her, I found her engaged in worship. Soon, however, the worship was over ; and by and by it became school time. Radhu was waiting prepared to go to the

Missionary School at Baghbazar, when Golap-ma came and said to Mother : "The girl is grown enough. Why should she now go to school?" On hearing her, Radhu began to cry.

Mother replied : "I do not think she is so grown up. A knowledge of reading and writing and handicrafts is certainly beneficial. She can do good to herself and her neighbours by this knowledge." Radhu accordingly went to school.

Presently A—'s mother came with a girl to have her initiated by the Mother. When initiation was over, she said to Mother : "She is no ordinary girl. After reading the books about the Master, she cut her hair, dressed herself as a man and went away to Vaidyanath to practise *tapasya*. She went and sat down in a forest. The Guru of her mother happened to pass by. When he saw her, he asked her her whereabouts, brought her to his place and sent word to her father."

Mother listened and then remarked on the girl's love of God. But other ladies present did not approve of this adventure of the girl.

A—'s mother said again : "She says to her husband, 'You are not my husband, the Lord of the Universe alone is my husband.' "

Later on, in course of conversation, Mother spoke highly of Gauri-ma and Durga Devi. She said : "Many take the name of the Lord after being slapped in the face by the world. But he alone is blessed, who can dedicate even in childhood his flower-like pure mind to the Lord. The girl (Durga Devi) is like an unsmelt flower. How finely Gauridasi has trained her up ! The girl's brothers tried very hard to give her in marriage, and Gauridasi used to fly with her from place to place. At last she took her to Puri, made her exchange garlands* with Jagan-natha and made her a nun. She is a fine, pure girl and is also well educated. I am told she will also appear in a Sanskrit Examination."

Mother dwelt also on the early life of Gauri-ma.—She had to suffer not a little in her life.

One night when I went to see Mother, she said in course of conversation : "Listen, mother ! When the Lord first created men, he made them almost absolutely of *sattva guna*. They were thus born with spiritual illumination and could easily feel the transitoriness of the world. They went out with the name of the Lord to practise *tapasya* and soon lost themselves in the

* As a symbol of marriage with the Lord.

transcendental state. The Lord found that the *lilâ* of the world could not be carried on with such men." Mother continued by reciting a Bengali poem which described how God next created men by mixing a preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas* with *sattva*, and added: "In those days, the village opera parties used to deal with these subjects. We have heard these things many times ; but now they are scarce."

The conversation turned on Sister Lakshmi.* Mother asked me if I knew her.

"No, Mother, I do not," I replied.

"She lives at Dakshineswar ; go and visit her. Have you been to Dakshineswar?"

"Yes, Mother, many times. But I did not know that she lives there."

"Did you see the *nahavat* where I lived?"

"I saw it from the outside."

"Go inside once. My whole household was within that small room. I had not seen a water-pipe before. When I first came to Calcutta† and went into the bath room, I found the pipe hissing like a serpent. I was terribly frightened. I went to the women and said: 'A serpent has come into the pipe,—come and see, it is hissing.' They laughed out and said: 'Don't you fear, it is not a serpent. There is always this sound before the water comes.' I then began to laugh myself." With this Mother began to laugh, and how pure and unsophisticated her laugh was!

Mother said again: "Have you seen the Master's festival at Belur?"

"No, Mother," I answered, "I have never been to Belur. I am told the monks and devotees do not like that women go there and disturb its peace. That is partly why I did not visit Belur."

"Go there once. Go to see the festival of the Master."

(To be continued)

* She was a niece of Sri Ramakrishna.

† She came to her brother's house at Kansaripara.

WHAT IS TRUE SELF-SURRENDER

By SWAMI SARADANANDA

When the superhuman *tapasya* of Sri Ramakrishna was over after twelve years, he received the command from the Divine Mother to remain in *Bhava-mukha* (on the threshold of relative consciousness). The Master obeyed. It is not easy to understand or explain what is meant by remaining in *Bhava-mukha*.

Many years ago, Swami Vivekananda once remarked to a friend that learned volumes could be written in explanation of a single teaching of the Master. This surprised the friend. He exclaimed: "Indeed! But we cannot discover such depths in his teachings. Will you explain one of his teachings in this manner?"

"Have you the brains to discover?" replied Swamiji. "Well, mention any of his teachings. I shall explain."

The friend rejoined: "Very well, explain to me the story of the elephant-Narayana and the *mâhout* Narayana with which the Master illustrated his teaching on seeing God in every being."

Swamiji at once plunged into a discussion of various Eastern and Western arguments on free-will or self-effort vs. predestination or Divine will. He showed how these arguments have come to no decision and how that story of the Master was a beautiful conclusion of the quarrel.—Swamiji's exposition lasted three days.

Indeed if we deeply study even the common daily behaviour and teachings of the Master, we are astonished to discover profound meaning in them. This is true of all Divine Incarnations. Except Sankara and a few others who had to controvert the mischievous arguments of their opponents in establishing religion on earth, all of them taught and explained in simple language, through touching anecdotes, similes and allegories. They did not care for learned expressions. But their simple words contained such significance and uplifting power as have remained unfathomed and unexhausted even after millenniums. Intimate knowledge reveals greater and greater meaning in them and one feels elevated higher and higher above the transient, evil world;—a seeker of God finds no end of meaning in their simple sayings.

This is the rule, and Sri Ramakrishna's words and behaviour

were no exception. They are revealing new meanings with the passing of days. We shall here quote one instance.

After Girish Ch. Ghosh had visited the Master several times, he one day surrendered himself absolutely to him and said: "What shall I do henceforth?" The Master replied: "Go on with what you have been doing at present. Try to keep to both sides of life—God and the world. We shall see what is to be done, when one side crumbles down. But try to recollect and contemplate on the Lord every morning and evening."

On hearing this, Girish said to himself: "Such is the nature of my work that I have no fixed hours even for bath, food and sleep. I am sure I shall forget to contemplate on the Lord every morning and evening. And that will be very bad, for it is a great sin to transgress the commands of the Guru. How then can I accept this injunction? It is a sin not to act up to one's promise even to an ordinary man. How more sinful it would be not to be true to one whom I have accepted as my guide to the Eternal!" But though Girish thought this way, he found it hard to speak out. For, he was conscious that the Master had not asked him to do anything very difficult. Yet he could not forget the extremely restless condition of his mind and knew that even short spiritual practices were impossible for him. Besides, he had always found his nature against routine work and hard and fast rules. He therefore remained silent.

At this, the Master looked at Girish and having divined his mind, said: "Well, if you cannot do this, remember the Lord once before meals and sleep."

Girish still remained silent. He was not sure that he was capable of even this. There were no fixed times for his meals. And sometimes it had so happened in the pressure of worldly affairs that he had gone through his meals quite unconsciously. Who could say that there would not be any more occasion of such forgetfulness? Girish remained silent filled with fear and despair.

The Master looked at Girish and said smilingly: "You will plead that you cannot do even this? Very well, then give me the power of attorney."* The Master was now in an exalted semi-conscious state.

* The power of attorney is a formal instrument by which one person authorises another to do some act or acts for him. By this expression Sri Ramakrishna indicated that henceforth he (Sri R.) would do on behalf of Girish all that was necessary for the latter's spiritual improvement.

This indeed was after the heart of Girish. He felt a great peace within and the thought of the great compassion inspired him with a great love for the Master. He said to himself that it was very well he had not bound himself down to any rules, and it was enough if he firmly believed that the Master would redeem him by his Divine powers. The giving of this spiritual 'letter warrant' then meant only this to Girish that he would not have to strive or practise *sadhana* himself to be rid of his evil tendencies, and that the Master himself would accomplish this by his own power. He then did not feel that, though intolerant of the bondage of discipline and unwilling to submit to it, he had yet freely embraced the hundred-fold stronger bondage of love. He did not and could not realise that henceforth he had only to be patient and passive under all circumstances, whether fame came or infame, good or evil, joy or sorrow. Now he was conscious only of the infinite kindness of Sri Ramakrishna, and was immensely proud that the Master had granted him protection. "Whatever others may think of me," he thought within himself, "however they may hate me, he, Sri Ramakrishna, is always, under all circumstances, mine. What do I care for others?" He was not aware that such pride, rare and auspicious to man, was considered a *sadhana* in the Bhakti-sastras.* He constantly indulged in the happy thought that Sri Ramakrishna had taken all his responsibilities and this made him continually meditate on Sri Ramakrishna and gradually brought about fundamental changes in his thoughts and actions. It is true Girish was not conscious of this change, but he was quite happy at the thought that Sri Ramakrishna loved him and was his very own.

The Master always taught that no one's mental outlook should ever be injured, and he always acted up to this principle in his behaviour with his disciples. Having therefore created the attitude of self-surrender in Girish, the Master henceforth trained him accordingly. One day, hearing Girish say "I shall do this" in certain trifling connection, the Master exclaimed: "How is this? Why do you say, 'I shall do this'? Suppose you fail to do it? You should say, 'God willing, I shall do this.'" Girish understood. "Quite right," he said to himself; "since I have fully surrendered my responsibilities to the Lord and he also has accepted them, I can do a certain thing only if he thinks it should be done by me and is to my benefit and allows me to do it. How can I hope to do it with my own

* Nārada-Bhakti-Sūtra.

power?" Thenceforward, Girish tried to give up speaking and thinking in this positive, egotistic way.

And thus days and years passed. In course of time Sri Ramakrishna passed away. Girish lost his wife and a son. But through all these his mind held to the thought that these sufferings were because the Master had thought them best for him ; the Master had taken his burden and it was for the Master to decide and do what were to his best interests,—Girish had no right to oppose or chafe at them. And thus he came to feel, with the passing of days, the true significance of self-surrender. Has he even now fully fathomed its meaning? * When Girish is questioned, he says: "Much yet remains to be known. Did I then perceive that self-surrender means so much? Now I find that ordinary sadhana has an end some time ; but this business of self-surrender has no end ;—one has to continually scrutinize if even his minutest thought and action were actuated by the power of the Lord or by his own wretched ego."

This reminds us that Jesus, Chaitanya and other great sages also thus granted their redeeming protection to some individuals. Ordinary teachers or saints have not the power to do this. They can at best teach a few *mantras* or practices by which they themselves have achieved spiritual progress. Or they may, by leading a pure life, attract others to the ideals of purity. But when men feel themselves helpless amidst the infinite bondages of the world and despair of carrying out the injunctions given for their salvation and cry out, "We cannot do these,—Oh, give us the power to do them!" then the ordinary guru is of no avail. It is beyond the power of one man to say to another man: "I take the responsibility of your sins,—I shall suffer for them on your behalf." Whenever there is decay of religion in the human heart, the Lord in his infinite mercy is born as a man and suffers for man's sins and releases him from the bondages of the world. He does not however allow him to go absolutely free: he makes him strive a little for his education ;—as Sri Ramakrishna said, 'through the grace of the Avatars, men fulfil ten lives' *Karma* in one life.' And this is true as much of races as of individuals. This indeed is described in the Gita as the gift of Divine vision to Arjuna, in the Puranas as Divine mercy, in the Vaishnava literature as the salvation of Jagai and Madhai or as the subjugation of the wicked, and in Christianity as the vicarious atonement of Jesus. Without the proof of Sri Ramakrishna's life, we could scarcely believe in its truth.

* This was written during the life-time of Sjt. Girish Ch. Ghosh.—Ed.

While staying at Shyampukur undergoing treatment for cancer, Sri Ramakrishna once saw his subtle body coming out of himself and roaming about the room. "Its back was full of ulcers," he said afterwards to us. "I was wondering why it was so when Mother showed me that the ulcers were caused by my taking upon myself the sins of others. People come with all their sins and touch me. Their plight excites my compassion and I cannot help taking those sins upon myself. This indeed is the origin of this cancer. I have never committed any sin myself,—why should I suffer on my own account?" This was a revelation to us. Can one really atone for another's sins and thus advance him in the path of spirituality? "Alas, alas," many of us then thought, "why did we touch him with our impurities and cause him this suffering?"

Another incident of Sri Ramakrishna's life occurs to us in this connection. On one occasion a man suffering from white leprosy approached the Master with the prayer that he should pass his hand over the diseased parts, by which he hoped he would be cured of his disease. The Master took pity on the man and said: "I do not know anything about this. But since you ask me, I shall pass my hand over them. The disease will be cured if Mother so wills." And he did so. But as a result he had such terrible pain throughout the day in his hand that he prayed to the Divine Mother that he would never again act in that way. The Master said afterwards: "The man was cured, but this (*i.e.*, his own) body underwent his suffering." Such incidents lead us to conclude that the secrets of scriptures, of the Vedas, Puranas, Bible, Koran, Tantras, etc., will be easily understood if we study them in the light of Sri Ramakrishna's life.

It may seem that self-surrender is an ordinary action and is easily done. Man is enslaved by his desires and seeks for advantage even in spiritual life. He wants to have worldly pleasure and Divine joy simultaneously. To him the pleasures of the world appear so sweet and delectable that the very thought of their renunciation fills him with a sense of dreadful emptiness.—What will he live for then? Therefore when he is told that the 'power of attorney' can be given also in spiritual life, he ecstatically thinks that he has at last found out the right thing. "Let me," so he thinks, "live my life with its iniquities and immoralities and enjoy the pleasures of the world, and let Sri Chaitanya, Jesus or Sri Ramakrishna look after my prospects in the other world." He does not feel that it is nothing but wicked self-deception. He wilfully blinds himself to his evil

doings lest their terrific faces should frighten him, and rushes headlong towards destruction. One day his eyes shall be uncovered and he will find himself tossed among tempestuous billows in a shoreless ocean, and he will feel that his 'power of attorney' has not been accepted by any one.

In fact, giving the 'power of attorney' is not a matter of mere wish. A certain state of mind resulting from hard struggle and perseverance is an essential condition. Only in that mental state can one truly give the power of attorney to the Lord who also then actually accepts it. One must feel the unreality of worldly joys and come to the end of one's powers after hard struggle. One must manifest the greatest activity and realise in one's inmost heart that human power is after all limited and impotent in the face of the Ultimate Power. One must struggle hard and practise strenuous sadhana to realise the Lord and be convinced at last that no amount of sadhana can be adequate to know the infinite Lord. When this helplessness will come, then the piteous cry will go forth from the heart for the help and protection of a Saviour, and then, and then alone will the Lord take his burden on himself. Otherwise, if a man finds the life of sadhana distasteful, leads an undisciplined life, and asserts, when protested against, that he has given the power of attorney to the Lord who is therefore responsible for his actions and must change his mind if he is to do better, he really deceives himself and others, he is not genuine.

Suppose a man has given the power of attorney to the Lord and has therefore no need of practising sadhana. But if it is genuine, he must think of the Lord every moment of his life and of how he has rescued him from the entanglements of the world. This constant thought will inevitably inspire him with a great love and devotion for the Lord. Out of his very gratitude and love he will take the name of God and meditate on him ; he will not require to be persuaded to do so. Therefore if one, after giving the power of attorney to God, finds oneself averse to the contemplation of him, one must infer that one's power of attorney has not been real and has not been accepted by God.*

* Adapted from the writer's Bengali work, *Sri Sri Ramakrishna-Lila Prasanga* (Discourses on the Life of Sri Ramakrishna). Future articles by this writer will also be adapted from the same source.

THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA *

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

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From the legends of the Vaisali Council we see how the moral canker had begun to eat into the vitals of Buddhism. The founder of the faith had preached it over a small tract of land from the Nepal Terai to Gaya and from Allahabad to Patna. It had been honoured by kings and merchants, but along with Hinduism and not to the exclusion of the latter faith. It had, therefore, gained no preponderance, even in this narrow tract of land, either in the number of its followers or in the wealth of its Church.

But, in time the monasteries began to grow rapidly in accumulated wealth from gifts. Only three hundred years after Buddha's death, we find startling examples of the costly donations to his Church in the stories of Asoka's dotage.

Yuan Chwang narrates it thus :

"King Asoka having fallen sick, desired to offer all his possessions (to the Buddhist monks), so as to crown his religious merit. The Minister who was carrying on the government was unwilling to comply with his wish. Some time after this, as he was eating part of an *amalaka* fruit, he playfully put the half of it for an offering.

"Then the king commanded an attendant officer to come and addressed him thus : 'Take this half fruit and offer it to the priests in the Kukkutaram monastery and speak thus to the venerable ones : All that I have is gone and lost, only this half fruit remains as my little possession.' ". (Beal, ii. 95. Watters, ii. 99). Here the king built a great stupa named the *Amalaka*. The story is also repeated by Aswaghosha.

ORIGIN OF SUB-SECTS

Wealth gave leisure to the Church, and the monkish brain devoted its well-endowed leisure to the weaving of minute subtleties of doctrine and the elaboration of ritual under which the founder's simple faith and code of practical ethics were completely buried. A very complex philosophy and cosmogony

* The third of a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

of their own was evolved by the Buddhist theologians in their monastic repose. They created a new and vast religious literature like the Vaishnav 'Goswamis' of Bengal in the 16th and 17th centuries. But, as no two philosophers are ever found to agree, these metaphysical subtleties led to quarrels and the Church broke up into a multitude of sub-sects, each under a leader and each proclaiming war against the other followers of the same faith. We learn that soon after Buddha's 'nirvan' and even before Asoka made it a world-religion, the followers of Buddhism had become divided into four great sects. Their internal dissensions went on increasing with the spread of the faith. Before the first century of the Christian era the number of recognised sub-divisions had increased to eighteen, besides probably many hundred smaller personal groups. As Yuan Chwang, in the 7th century, mournfully noted, "The different (Buddhistic) schools are constantly at variance, and their contending utterances rise like angry waves of the sea. . . . The different sects have their separate masters. . . . There are eighteen schools, each claiming pre-eminence." [Beal, i. 80.] For some time before this Chinese pilgrim's visit, the various schools had been grouped under two main divisions, the 'Mahayan' and 'Hinayan'; but it did not improve matters. These two sects hated each other more bitterly than either of them did the Hindus.

In Ceylon, the jealousy and antipathy between the rival monasteries, the Mahavihar and Abhayagiri, led to constant dissension and occasional persecution, such as the destruction of the Mahavihar in the reign of King Mahasena (C. 300 A.D.).

Thus, the unity of the Buddhist Church was broken, and at the same time moral decay resulted from the increased wealth, indolence and luxury of the monks. The lavish benefactions of Asoka and Kanishka and the position of supreme respect in the State given by them to the Buddhist monks, were, in reality, a curse rather than a blessing to the faith.

During the so-called Buddhist period, Hinduism was neither dead nor silent. It may have lost the royal patronage under certain kings, it may have produced no great scholar or saint for a generation or two. But only half a century after Asoka's death, when his dynasty was overthrown, Hinduism raised its head and soon recovered its ascendancy. This was effected not by its persecuting or penalising the Buddhists, but by producing greater scholars, better authors, nobler saints and finer artists, and above all by practising greater active piety or philanthropy,

—in respect of which Buddhism had lost the superiority it had held in its founder's lifetime or in Asoka's reign.

The intellectual decline of the Buddhist priests in Asoka's own capital is well illustrated by a story narrated by Yuan Chwang :

"At first there were about a hundred *Sangharamas* in this city ; the priests were grave and learned, and of high moral character. The scholars among the heretics (i.e. Hindus) were silent and dumb. But afterwards when that generation of priests had died out, their successors were not equal to those gone before. Then the teachers of the heretics, during the interval, gave themselves up to earnest study with a view to mastery. Whereupon they summoned their partisans to assemble together within the priests' precincts, and then they addressed them, saying with a loud voice : 'Strike loudly the *ghanta* and summon all the learned men (i.e., Buddhist monks). If we are wrong, let them overthrow us.'

"They then addressed the king and asked him to decide between the weak and the strong. . . . And now the heretical masters were men of high talent and marked learning ; the (Buddhist) priests, although numerous, were weak in their verbal discussion. The heretics said, 'We have got the victory. From this time forth let no *sangharama* dare to sound the *ghanta* to call together a congregation.' The king confirmed this result of the discussion. . . . For twelve years the *ghanta* was not sounded."* [Beal, ii. 96-97. Watters, ii. 100.]

HINDU REVIVAL

The wise leaders of the Hindu revival, while they beat the Buddhists by avoiding arid philosophical subtleties and the jarring of sect with sect, and by showing greater love and care for the suffering lower classes, also cut the ground from under the feet of Buddhism, by stealing several of its practices which appeal to the human heart and imagination. Thus, image-worship and the car-procession were most probably borrowed by the Hindus from Buddhism. In the fourth century, Fa Hien noticed in the Buddhist monasteries of Khotan a car-procession exactly like our own. [Beal, i. xxvi.]

By the beginning of the seventh century A.D., this policy of new Hinduism had already so far crippled Buddhism that Yuan Chwang noticed Hindu temples outnumbering Buddhist

* And then came a Buddhist champion, but only from Southern India!

monasteries in an increasing proportion as he proceeded from the Panjab to Bengal, i.e. through the very province of Buddha's missionary labours.

What did the leaders of Indian Buddhism do in the face of this growing strength of their foes? They did not abate their internal quarrels one jot. They produced no outstanding scholar or saint for work in India. Even Harsha's reign was the last flicker of a dying lamp as regards the hopes of Buddhism.

The Pala kings of Bengal who rose to power a century after Harsha and held sway for three hundred years, were, no doubt, Buddhists; but they equally patronised Hindu scholars and holy men. Their ministers and courtiers included Hindus no less than Buddhists, and the Sanskrit books and exquisite statuary produced under them were on Hindu subjects as much as Buddhistic. Hindus and Buddhists alike studied the grammar of Panini and cultivated Sanskrit logic in this period, as the mediæval Sanskrit literature recovered from Nepal and Tibet richly shows.

The Buddhists reaped the benefit of their great universities at Nalanda and Vikramsila. We know of no Hindu University in the North; but many rich Hindu householders and kings maintained Sanskrit pandits who fed and taught the personal groups of pupils in their homes as was the practice in India down to our own days.

THE MAHAYAN SCHOOL

The Mahayan school had during the first seven centuries of the Christian era produced a vast mass of literature, both religious and secular, but in Sanskrit. It is very little known in India, because the best workers on the subject have been Frenchmen and Germans.†

The Mahayan school is of very great interest as forming a bridge, or rather a halfway house, between the old Buddhism and modern Hinduism. The doctrine of the Mahayan was intensely human and practical. Its monks did not all bury themselves in the seclusion of their cells, each seeking to attain his personal salvation by becoming a passionless *arhat*.

They revived the active philanthropy which Buddha had preached in every Jataka parable. It was essentially a religion of the service of man, though it produced great scholars too. At the same time, it was a very popular religion, because it

† A useful summary in translation is available in Mr. G. K. Narayan's *Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism*, (1920).

made an irresistible appeal to the emotions by its gorgeous ritual, its preaching the cult of *bhakti*, or devotion to a personal saviour (*Bodhisattva*), its programme of active humanitarianism, as distinct from lonely contemplation and self-mortification.

What was the essence of Mahayan Buddhism? In the curious evolution and transformation of his religion in the course of many centuries, Buddha the living preacher had long ago ceased to be regarded as a human being. He had become a god, or rather the king of the gods, too high above us to be approached by mortals directly. He was now a dread shadow or supreme name only, hidden within the halo of his power and sanctity, and not a deity to be visualised or addressed by mankind. Therefore, we sinners must send our petitions to him through his courtiers and constant servitors. These were *Bodhisattvas* or men who, by the practice of piety, self-control and sacrifice for the good of others, in successive births through millions of years, had been gradually rising higher and higher in the scale of being, and who would after millions of years more reach the finality of development as perfect Buddhas. In short, they were Buddhas in the making, and therefore could best act as intercessors between sinning men and the great Buddha. Hence, in Mahayan, the worship of *Bodhisattvas* practically superseded that of Buddha himself, and the votive statues of the former almost drove those of the latter out of the field, as archæological excavations in the chief Mahayan sites show.

Mahayan was an intensely living and active faith. It came forth into the world, visiting the homes of the people, instead of seeking cloistered seclusion, sanctimonious aloofness from others and intellectual pride, as was generally the case with Hinayan. Therefore, Hinayan was in comparison with it, unprogressive, coldly intellectual, inert and rather monotonous through lack of variety and influence over human conduct.

By this I do not mean to assert that Mahayan lacked ascetics and theological writers of its own. I mean, the meditative side of Mahayan was not everything; the millions of laymen were reached by its practical side or philanthropy.

When the new Hinduism asserted itself after the re-organisation of the social grades in the 7th and 8th centuries of Christ, the monastic and contemplative elements of Mahayan Buddhism were borrowed by the Shaivas, and the devotional and humanitarian elements by the Vaishnavas. In consequence, Buddhism disappeared from India by being swallowed up and completely absorbed by the new Hinduism. There is hardly any difference

traceable between Shiva the Yogi of Hindu mythology and the Dhyani Buddha of later Mahayan. The car procession of the three idols,* the gorgeous worship in temples, the cult of bhakti or personal love for God as man, the active service of the poor (in whom Narayan incarnates Himself) and the preaching friars of the new and revived Vaishnavism of the 8th century were the weapons taken from the Buddhists which conquered the decaying Buddhism because of the superior energy and fervour of neo-Hinduism.

The decaying or abandoned monasteries of the Buddhists were taken possession of by the Shaiva monks and raised their heads again as Hindu maths, e.g., the Bodhi Gaya temple itself, which Yuan Chwang had found overgrown with jungles and almost deserted in 634, was appropriated by Shaiva monks of the Giri section. The Vaishnav Vairagis replaced the philanthropic Mahayan Sramans. The neighbouring people hardly felt the change, it was so slight; the thing was the same, only the name of the god was different and a new set of men, clad in the same long yellow robes, were performing the same worship.

And even the name of the god was not really changed in the transformed Hinduism of the time, because Buddha was finally given a place in the Hindoo pantheon as the eighth incarnation of Vishnu.

The Shiva-linga at Sarnath, a short distance from the Asoka stupa, is known as Shiva Sangheshwar, i.e., the 'Lord of the Sangha or the third member of the Buddhist Trinity.'†

THE TRANSITION TO HINDUISM

In the last stage of Mahayan the transition from Buddhism to Hinduism was rendered imperceptible by the agency of Tantricism.

In going out of North India to convert millions of primitive Mongolians in Tibet, Central Asia and China, neither the pure ethics of Buddhism as taught by the founder nor the subtle philosophy woven by the rich and leisured monks in the Gangetic valley, was found to be of practical use. Success could be attained in mass conversions of such magnitude only by

* Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra. Compare Fa Hien's description, "They made a four-wheeled image-car, more than thirty cubits high. . . . The chief image stood in the middle of the car with two Bodhisattvas in attendance on it." (Legge's tr. p. 19.)

† Jaynarayan Ghoshal's *Kashi Parikrama* (written about 1792) speaks of Hindus worshipping the Sangheshwar linga after crossing the Varuna river. This name also occurs in the *Kashi Mahatmya*.

stooping down to the intellect and familiar practices of the converts.

Compare the policy of Robertode Nobili in Southern India.

The Buddhist preachers in these new lands made a compromise and adopted the animism or spirit-worship which was the prevailing religion of the Mongolians, and merely superimposed the Buddhist pantheon on it, *i.e.*, they gilded spirit-worship with a thin coating of Buddhistic doctrines and gave Buddhistic names to the locally adored spirits. This Tantrik worship gradually developed an iconography, a philosophy and a literature of its own in Tibet and East Bengal.

The gods and goodesses of Tantrik Buddhism became the deities of the Shaiva form of Hinduism. Thus the Buddhist Tara was identified as the Shakti or female energy of Shiva and adored as a Hindu goddess. The dreaded Kali and other mahavidyas are further examples of this borrowing of cults.

Tantrikism was the most widely prevalent and popular religion of North and East Bengal* from the 8th to the 12th century and even later. Whether this Tantrik population should be called Buddhist or Hindu was a quarrel over words only. The people did not feel any change, when they described themselves as Hindus instead of Buddhists, in an imaginary census return of the time.

In Central and Western Bengal Tantrikism was practised, but not as the predominant religion. Buddhism in other forms lingered there as late as the sixteenth century. The researches of Dr. Haraprasad Shastri have recovered this lost page of our religious history and established the facts on unassailable evidence.

With the moral decline of their monks and the failure of the Church in India to produce great scholars and saints, the latter-day Buddhist congregation in India were left as sheep without a shepherd. Their actual religion lost its populace, with traditions and practices and continued as a mere faith of the populace, with traditions and practices that were blindly followed, and this latest Buddhism in Bengal and Bihar took its place by the side of the worship of the village godlings under ignorant quacks as priests. The Buddhistic ritual probably continued to be followed, but in ignorance of the philosophy underlying it. Thus, Buddhism in its last stage in India ceased to be a living growing faith, because it could not have an ex-

* A Bengali priest of Kali was granted land and installed in his kingdom by a Raja of the Madras coast, as an inscription records.

panding and perpetually modernised literature and a fresh stream of teachers in every generation.

The upper classes of society, especially in the towns, went over to Hinduism very early, and the faith of Buddha lingered in the villages and out of the way places. (Compare the state of paganism in the Roman Empire after Constantine the Great.) A class of Brahmins in North Bihar are still called Babhan—which is the Prakrit form of Brahmana—and they are considered as socially lower than the other sections of the Brahmins, though there is not the least suggestion of their being a mixed caste or defiled by any social pollution of forbidden food. This strange fact can be best explained by the theory that they represent the descendants of those Buddhists who were very late in abjuring Buddhism for Hinduism and giving up Prakrit for Sanskrit, so that their brethren who had changed their faith some centuries earlier refused to admit them to social equality.

CONVERSION OF THE LATER INDIAN BUDDHISTS

The conversion of the later Indian Buddhists to Hinduism was effected by some giant intellects among the neo-Hindu scholars. Shankaracharya, (*circa* 800 A.D.), by his invincible logical power and scriptural knowledge, defeated all the Buddhist theologians that he met from Cape Comorin to the Ganges. Ramanuja (*c.* 1100) did the same in a more limited sphere. Four centuries later (1511 A.D.), Chaitanya in his pilgrimage through Southern India extinguished the last remnants of Buddhism there. As his biographer writes:—"At Vriddhachalam a very learned Buddhist professor held forth on the nine doctrines of his Church before the Master. . . . who argued with him in order to lower his pride. The very Buddhist philosophy of nine tenets, though rich in logical reasoning, was torn to pieces by the Master's argumentation. . . . The great philosophers were all vanquished; the audience tittered; the Buddhist felt shame and alarm. . . . The professor rose up and began to chant Hari! Hari! He did reverence to the Master, saluting him as Krishna." [Sarkar's tr. of Chaitanya-Charitamrita, p. 76.]

Unlike Shankara and Ramanuja, Chaitanya was intensely emotional and while on the one hand he defeated the Buddhist champions of his day in learned disputation, he, on the other hand, swept the masses into his fold by the striking appeal of his lovable personality, his saintly character, and his own example of bhakti. The priests of the older faith had been

already dethroned from the hearts of their congregation, which lay vacant and ready to receive a new true Master.

In Bengal, Buddhism continued in the form of Dharma worship. That this village god Dharma is only the second member of the Buddhist Trinity will become evident from the character of the *puja* and the attributes of the god Dharma as given in the surviving literature of this cult, namely the *Dharma Mangal*, the *Shunya Puran*, etc. The Dharma of this worship is not a Brahmanic god; his image is an earthen mound set up at the end of the village, and his priests belong to the lower castes. [H. P. Shastri's *Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal*, 1898, P. A. S. S., 1894, p. 135.] A significant light is thrown upon the subject by the tradition recorded in a mediaeval Bengali poem named *Niranjaner Ushma* (and also in *Kalima Jallal*) to the effect that Dharma, oppressed by the Hindus, took the guise of a bearded man with a cap, etc., i.e., of the Turks who invaded Upper India under the house of Ghor about 1200 A. D. There can, therefore, be no doubt of the Dharma-puja being a survival of Buddhism. Dr. H. P. Shastri has also adduced reasons for holding that the *Sahajiya* and *Nyada* sects of Bengal, who are commonly classed as Vaishnavs, are essentially later decadent Buddhists.*

The death-blow to Buddhism in the famous cities of North India and along the main highway of the Gangetic valley was given by the Muslim conquest of the 13th century. The monastery of Bihar, in the Patna district, was sacked and its monks slaughtered by these invaders under the mistake that they were soldiers, as will be seen from the following Persian narrative of a contemporary :

"Muhammad-i-Bakhtyar organized an attack upon the fortified city of Bihar. . . . They captured the fortress and acquired great booty. The greater number of the inhabitants of the place were Brahmins, and the whole of those Brahmins had their heads shaven [these were really shamanas] ; and they were all slain. . . . There were a great number of books there. . . . On becoming acquainted [with the contents of those books], it was found that the whole of the fortress and city was college, and in the Hindu tongue they call a college a *vihara*." [*Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, tr. by Raverty, p. 520.]

Before the ceaseless eastward tide of Muslim raiders, the surviving monks of North India fled to Nepal with their books,

* H. P. Shastri's *Discovery*, etc.; *Dharma Puja Bidhi*, *Bauddha Gan o Doha*; J. A. S. B. 1895, p. 55 and 65.

and there their sacred literature was collected in the 19th century by Brian Hodgson (the physician of the British residency) and sent to Paris, where they formed the source of new and most fruitful Buddhistic studies under Burnouf and his pupils.

But in obscure and out of the way places in Bengal, some families continued to follow Buddhism as late as 1436 A. D., in which year a manuscript of the *Bodhicharyavata*r was copied in the Bengali alphabet, in a village of the Burdwan district by a scribe named Amitava, who is described as *sad-bauddha-karana-kayastha-thakkura*. But by the end of the 16th century, the new energy breathed into Bengali Vaishnavism by Chaitanya and his apostles and into Assamese Vaishnavism by Shankaradeva and his school, swept over the whole country and completed the absorption of the last remnants of the Buddhists into the fold of Hinduism in the land of Buddha's birth.

INDIAN VILLAGE-FOLK

BY A WESTERN WANDERER

It was a brilliant autumn morning. The monsoon was over and the rain-washed jungle through which I passed was fragrant with fresh foliage. In the afternoon I came to a little village, on the outskirts of which a peasant was at work in his field. When I approached him he halted behind his wooden plow, greeted me, and invited me to squat with him. He handed me a *chillum* (pipe) of tobacco and we smoked and talked. He told me that he had a faithful wife, two sons of whom he was very proud, and two little daughters-in-law.

The eldest son had been abroad to fight for the British Raj. He had broken caste-rule by crossing the *Kalapani* (ocean); but he had feasted ten Brahmans to atone for his transgression. Now he was purified and the villagers were proud of their hero. Momentous questions which agitate the Western mind did not weigh with my peasant friend; his interests were confined to his immediate surroundings and his religion. He spoke of *Brahmamayi*, the great Mother of the Universe, who provides for all her children according to their needs. "All creation is one," he said, "the bullocks, their owner, the flowers of the field—all are kin, for one Mother-Soul breathes through them all."

The peasant invited me to his home." "Sir," he said, "you are a stranger, accept my hospitality, and grace my humble dwelling with your presence; the evening meal will be made ready."

I followed my friend to his home in the village. His wife was veiled, and Hindu decorum did not allow her to speak to a stranger; but she showed her welcome in other ways: she brought me a tumbler full of cool drinking water, and spread a palm-leaf mat on the earthen floor of a little outhouse, where my host bade me make myself at home. The room was clean, but dark, for there was only a small window and the door was low. There was not a piece of furniture in the room—no chair or table—for the Hindus sit on a mat or carpet on the floor. As it was not yet evening I went to inspect my surroundings.

Near my room was the peasant's dwelling house consisting of two large rooms and a veranda, built of bamboo and mud. The house was shaded by gigantic peepul trees; toward the right rose a cluster of delicate bamboo, and toward the left stood a few fruit trees—plum, lime and papaya. There were two separate clay huts, the one a kitchen, the other a store-room. In a grove of coconut palms two bullocks—those that had been working in the field—were tied to an earthen trough filled with newly cut corn-stalks.

At a little distance amid luxuriant verdure stood a neighbor's cottage. An old man seated on a log at the entrance of the home smoked his *hooka*, and watched a naked baby play at his feet. The baby was his grand-child, he told me, and would be three years old when the moon would be full in the month of Aswin.

I passed on and came to a well located in the center of the village, where stately maidens filled their shining copper water-vessels which they carried on their hips or balanced on their heads with marvelous dexterity. They laughed and talked; but when they saw me approach they were silent, and pulled their white saris over their classic features revealing only their laughing black eyes.

East from the well stood a magnificent *Vakula* tree shading like a huge umbrella a platform of solid masonry about three feet high, upon which the gentry of the village had gathered after the day's work. Seated on mats some were talking, others were amusing themselves at cards and chess. I halted a moment to exchange the greetings of the day, then walked back to my room, where my host's eldest son in the gentle, respectful way of the Orient invited me to supper. I sat on a little straw mat

spread on the earthen floor. The meal was simple enough—rice, vegetable curry, lentil soup and hot buffalo milk. The rice and curry were placed on a freshly washed banana leaf ; the milk was served in a brass tumbler and the soup in an earthen cup which was thrown away after being used. I ate with the fingers of the right hand—Hindu fashion—spoons and forks not being used by the Hindus. The left hand is considered ceremonially unclean and to use it in eating would constitute a grave breach of etiquette. It was not a little disconcerting to have the entire family look on wondering how a Westerner could eat with his fingers. A partly veiled woman held a jar of water which she poured over my hands when the meal was over. Then came one of the little daughters-in-law with a cone-shaped little packet—a betel leaf holding lime and spices folded and held together with a clove—which she insisted that I take to make my mouth sweet.

After the meal neighbors with their children curious to meet the stranger, gathered under the spreading branches of a mango tree, and whispered among themselves till I joined them. Then we squatted on the soft grass. The children sat very close by my side ; the men in a half circle before me and the woman a little farther back.

The headman of the village, a tall sharp-featured fellow with piercing black eyes, dressed in a long white loin-cloth, shawl and turban, went through the formalities of eastern politeness, and took the lead in the conversation. He was curious about many things concerning me.—Where had I come from? Why did I dress like a native? Was I a missionary? Did I belong to the police? I told him that I was neither a missionary nor a police-officer, that I had come from America to learn something about the customs and the religion of the Hindus. He seemed a trifle suspicious till I had gone through his cross-questioning to his entire satisfaction. Then he became communicative. I found him an interesting talker well acquainted with the ancient lore of the Aryans with its inexhaustible wealth of myths and legends. He was also somewhat of a philosopher. I was astonished to find this simple rustic a man of depth and culture.

“Where did you learn all this?” I asked.

“Well,” he said, “I know no more than the others do. Sometimes minstrels come to our village and they sing ballads from our epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Then there is the professional story-teller whom we engage at festivals, the

wandering monk and the travelling actor. From these we learn what little we know."

A little boy stood behind me. He was as naked as the good God had made him, but his proud mother had fastened a silver chain around his waist which blended beautifully with the child's velvety skin. He was a pretty child with sparkling brown eyes ; the lids being painted with kohl accentuated their size and lustre. Another child, also naked, wonderfully beautiful with dark curly hair and golden-yellow skin wore anklets with tiny bells which tinkled when he moved.

Now and then a boy jumped up to attend to the needs of an elder, to fill the pipes or to bring drinking water. Everyone drank from the same *lota* (tumbler), but the lips did not touch the vessel. The head was thrown backward and the water was poured down the throat in a steady stream. This is not an easy feat for one not practiced, and I caused a good deal of merriment in my attempt to drink in this novel fashion. Should the lips touch the vessel it would become unclean and would have to be washed and polished with earth or ashes before anyone could use it again.

A bright boy, about twelve years old, dressed in a blue velvet jacket and a white loin-cloth told me that the children went to school when they did not have to work in the fields. They sit with their teacher on the ground under the shade of a tree, or when it rains, on the floor inside the building. The floor is used for writing surface, and the alphabet is taught by tracing the letters in yellow sand.

I asked one of the men, an intelligent looking chap, a Brahman as the sacred thread over his left shoulder indicated, how the children received moral training.

"They are taught at home," he said, "by parents or grandparents, through stories from the sacred books. Our scriptures teach that children should honor their parents and teachers by rising in their presence, by ministering to them, by obeying them, by supplying their wants and by attention to instruction. Special stress is laid on not injuring others in word, thought or deed."

The moon stood high when the party broke up. My host bade me peace, and I was left alone under a brilliant sky aglow with fiery twinkling stars. I retired left to my own thoughts and happy dreams.

At dawn I was awakened by the song of a minstrel who

went through the village. He stood at my door and sang in a clear voice :

“Awake, brother ! Awake !
 Cling no longer to the dream !
 Life is fleeting, and pleasures do not endure forever.
 Time speeds on. Renounce vain hopes and worship
 God.
 Awake, brother ! Rise and call on the Lord !
 Sing His sweet name ! All else is vanity.”

Later in the morning a begging friar in the loose salmon-colored garb of his Order came to my host's door and called for alms. “Narayana Hari !” “In the name of God !” This was his formula of begging. Then he sang a popular ditty of Sri Radha who loved the divine Krishna.

“Sisters, where is my Krishna ?
 Why did my Beloved forsake me ?
 The trees weep, and the flowers droop ;
 The birds are silent, and the cows withhold their milk.
 The Light of my heart has gone away.
 Sisters, make haste, and bring back my Krishna !”

The monk received alms—a handful of rice—and moved on blessing the giver.

I went for a walk and found the village fringed with jungle, vistas of deep green and patches of bright fragrant flowers. Orchids, like birds, clung to the branches of umbrageous mango trees, and shining gossamer covered the succulent leaves. In the jungle was a lotus pond bordered by palms and banana plants, where women of high-caste families had come for their daily ceremonial bath.

I came to the ghat where men were bathing. They polished their teeth with charcoal, and rubbed their bodies with mustard oil. Then they entered the water up to their necks with their loin-cloths on, dipped their heads several times, and with folded hands repeated their prayers.

I left the lotus pond, and walking back through the village, passed a neat little home covered with honeysuckle and shaded by *asvattha* trees, where a pious soul in the early morning had performed the simple ceremony of “Salutation of the Threshold”. A simple artistic design had been traced with rice-flour on the threshold of the home. Within the design had been placed jasmin blossoms and marigolds and no doubt a prayer had been whispered to the Deity to protect the home against evil influences.

I was invited, with a few neighbors, to take my midday meal with one of the wealthiest families in the village. It was a feast-day, for the host's youngest son was six months old, and the ceremony of *Annaprasana* (the feast of rice) would be celebrated. It was the first day that rice would be given to the infant. The goddess Shashti, Protectress of Children, would be worshipped, and kinsmen and friends would be entertained. The worship of Mother Shashti had just begun when I arrived. Before the goddess, who was represented by a red stone placed under a fig tree, a priest recited holy texts while the parents of the child placed flowers and sweetmeats on the stone, and prayed that the beneficent goddess might spare the child's life and protect it from harm. Then a little rice was put in the baby's mouth.

The food for the guests was not yet ready, and I grasped this opportunity to learn something about the customs of these simple folks. The host, a perfect gentleman of the merchant class, middle-aged, with clear-cut features, was all courtesy and quite ready to answer my questions. He told me that cooking was regarded as a religious ceremony, the food being offered to God before anyone is allowed to partake of it. The kitchen with its clay-built stove is a holy place where no one of lower caste is allowed to enter. The cook may not taste the food while cooking, for that would desecrate it and make it unfit as an offering.

The meal was now ready, and we were called to dinner. The men and children took their seats cross-legged on little mats spread in a row on the clean dining-floor. Being a foreigner, I was not allowed to sit in the same row with the others. That would have been against caste-rule. My mat was therefore spread at right angles to the others. A leaf of the banana plant was placed at each seat, and thereon were piled steaming hot rice, vegetables and a thick soup made of pulse. Other courses, curds and pudding were placed around the leaf in small metal and earthen cups. Then we began to eat. The food was well prepared, and most of the dishes though highly seasoned were very palatable.

The women of the family served the food and were busily engaged waiting on the men and children, while an animated conversation was carried on among the diners. I asked why the women did not eat with us. "They eat later," said my nearest neighbor. "This is an ancient custom which they hold dear. And the mother eats when everyone else has finished. She considers it her duty to look to the welfare of the other members

of the household before taking thought of herself." During the meal I saw her move from place to place full of tender solicitude for the need of one and another. "To serve, and look after the welfare of others," my neighbor said, "is considered a privilege among Hindu women."

I found Indian dining-floor manners very different from Western table manners. Seated on the floor, care must be taken to tuck away the feet, for to display the feet is considered offensive, especially so if done in the presence of an elder or superior. Shoes are never carried into the home, far less into the dining-room ; and one is supposed to have taken a bath and put on clean garments before sitting down to the morning meal.

Some of the men ate very neatly. With a certain dexterity they put the food into their mouths, the fingers hardly touching the lips. Coughing, sneezing and blowing of the nose should be avoided during the meal. But there is no objection to making sound in the process of eating, nor at opening the mouth during mastication, nor at talking with the mouth full.

When the meal was over we rose, left the room, washed our hands and mouths, and then took *pan* (betel) and smoked the hooka (hubble-bubble). When we went home we told our host that our stomachs were filled to capacity, and he was well pleased.

In the evening, when the last rays of the setting sun rested tenderly on the bushy tops of the trees, and the light mist on the rice fields was turned into a rosy gauze, I visited a little temple in the center of the village, not far from the well. The temple was a simple white structure, raised about three feet from the ground, and surrounded by a colonaded stone platform. At the entrance of the temple stood a small image of the Sacred Bull, Siva's faithful servant. Behind the temple was a grove of guava trees, and in front stood two fine *palasa* trees covered with gorgeous flowers. The temple was dedicated to the god Siva, Lord of Peace. Siva's image, the holy lingam, which is the symbol of life,—an upright oval black stone—stood in the center of the shrine.

I squatted on the stone platform at the entrance of the temple, and watched a priest arrange little oil lamps, and light the incense. A party of barefoot devotees came toward the temple, tall stalwart people, the men in white turbans and baggy trousers, the women in blue and red saris covering their entire bodies, the ends gracefully folded on their heads. They talked in loud voices, laughed and gesticulated till they reached the

platform. Then they became silent, mounted the platform, and entering the temple rang a brass bell which hung suspended from the center of the dome. With folded hands, holding a flower or two, they touched their bowed heads, placed the flowers upon the lingam, knelt down, touched the cement floor with their foreheads, and with a soft whisper, "Siva, Siva," turned away. One of the women placed a garland of tiny white flowers around the neck of the image of the Sacred Bull. As a further act of reverence they performed the ceremony of *pradakshina* (circumambulation). Seven times they walked around the temple, all the while repeating the sacred name of Siva.

A splendidly built Brahman youth entered the temple. "Hara! Hara! Mahadeva!" "Lord! Lord! Lord Supreme!" he shouted at the top of his voice as he rang the bell. From his shining lota he poured water over the lingam, touched the image with his hands, then his own forehead, and with a loud cry, "Siva! Siva! Vyom! Vyom!" "Lord! Lord! Thou art beyond space!" strode away.

The priest began the *Aratrica* (evening service). He beat a drum, blew a conch, and then with his left hand took a small bell which he kept ringing during the service. With his right hand he waved before the lingam a metallic candlestick holding several little lights, and chanted in Sanskrit the mantrams (sacred texts) dedicated to Siva. This concluded the ceremony. He extinguished the lights, all but one flickering smoky flame from a cotton wick dipped in oil. Then he took his seat on a mat on the floor, counted his beads, and became absorbed in his meditations.

I bowed my head before the Siva-image, and walked back through the narrow bazaar with its poorly lighted shops where were sold rice, spices, oil, vegetables and other necessities of Indian life. When I returned to my room great watching stars shone bright in a black velvet sky, and myriads of fireflies, like shining diamonds, danced among the shadows of the trees. My host was waiting for me for the evening meal was ready. After the meal we smoked and leisurely talked for an hour. Then I retired, for the following day at dawn I would be on my way to another village.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

SHANTI ASHRAMA DAYS

In the fifth year, much to the regret of all, Gurudas retired from the Ashrama to carry out a long cherished purpose of a trip to India and one of the young men from the monastery was sent to serve in his place.

For years Swami had felt the need of new buildings at the Ashrama as the original structures were showing the ravages of time and were inadequate to house and care for the growing numbers of the annual classes, so he made comprehensive plans for every possible development of the Ashrama. The Divine Mother in full measure blessed his unselfish and untiring zeal with the necessary workers and the means to carry out his plans.

In the year 1909 it so happened that an experienced carpenter had just become a disciple of Swami Trigunatita and felt a desire to live at the Ashrama at the same time offering his services to Swami. Swami accepted them and the disciple left San Francisco accompanied by two other monastery members to start the work. The great plans which Swami had cherished so long for the development of the beloved Shanti Ashrama now began to take shape. Lumber and other necessary materials and supplies were shipped in advance to the town of Livermore, from which the Ashrama could now be reached from the west by a more accessible route, the old Ysabel road leading from San Jose *via* Mt. Hamilton being too rough for hauling. From Livermore the lumber and supplies had to be hauled 37 miles by wagon over mountain roads, fifteen miles of the distance through the beautiful Livermore canyon, the home and haunt in days gone by of Joaquin Murietta, one of the most famous bandits known to early California. For the last ten miles the road was very rough in places and great care had to be exercised to prevent the wagon overturning. The hauling required several trips, but notwithstanding tremendous difficulties, after strenuous efforts of both men and horses, the material all arrived at the Ashrama and the actual work of building began. Sections of

ground separated at some distance from the other had been allotted to each sex and when the class came the following year, 1910, they found for their convenience a number of new substantial cottages ready for occupancy in both the sections for men and women. On every hand was seen the fruits of the indefatigable mind of Swami.

A commodious building, comprising a large kitchen, dining room, two storerooms and cellar, replaced the old structure; in addition new outhouses and a large barn were constructed in which to house the cows, two horses and colt, a buggy, the winter feed and the various field implements and vehicles.* New springs were opened, a new water tank and windmill were constructed and pipes were laid to the kitchens insuring constant running water at all times, and ending the former hardship of the long carry of water from the well. The next year, 1911, a two-room cottage with a study and sleeping quarters, for the resident Swami, was erected, midway on the road between the men's section and the entrance gate, and a three-room cottage was added in the men's section for the permanent quarters of the man in charge.

For protection during rainy weather, a shelter where the devotees might remove their shoes before entering the holy precincts, was added to the meditation cabin. On the top of the meditation cabin was a wooden flag bearing the inscription "Om Ramakrishna" carved in relief by the hands of Swami himself. The same inscription appeared on a flagpole on the Dhuni hill and on the entrance gate to the Ashrama.

The daily schedule for Ashrama Classes in the month of June, 1911, was as follows:—

First call by bugle	...	...	3-55 A.M.
Second bugle call—to rise	...	...	4-00 A.M.
First class at platform	...	...	4-30—5-30 A.M.
Breakfast with Gita readings	...	...	7-30—8-30 A.M.
Ladies' class	...	...	10-30—11-30 A.M.
Second platform class	...	...	12-00—1-00 NOON
Sanskrit class	...	...	3-00—4-00 P.M.
Supper Service	...	...	4-30—5-30 P.M.
Third platform class	...	...	8-00—9-00 P.M.
Lights out	...	...	10-00 P.M.

For some years the morning meditation class had been held at the hour of 6 A.M. in the meditation cabin, where all of the classes were held and which had been sanctified from its foundation by the holy ministrations of Swami Turiyananda. Midway between the meditation cabin and the boundary fence

* Today, twenty years later, a motor truck has replaced the horse and wagon.

was a large oak tree and, as this year the class met in the month of June, the suggestion was made that the daily meditations for the full class be held under the wide-spreading branches of that tree. Accordingly, Swami had a low platform made to accommodate 50 people, but he also changed the morning hour of meditation from 6 to 4-30 o'clock. This was a novel experience to those who were unaccustomed to rising earlier than 6 or 7 o'clock, but they cheerfully complied with the rule and at that early hour dimly outlined forms could be seen moving through the darkness from the separate quarters of the men and women toward the large oak tree, on which was drawn in white the mystic symbol, "OM." The men remained standing at a distance with their backs to the platform until the women had arrived and were seated. Men and women alike seated themselves in Oriental fashion on the platform facing Swami ; the women in front and the men in back.

The platform ran north and south. Swami sat facing the north on a strong table elevated above the platform, with a small desk arrangement in front of him, on which was the book he was reading that morning, all lighted by a tall kerosene lamp shaded from the eyes of the students on the platform below. Swami opened the service as all other classes at the Ashrama with the chanting of the Gayatri, repeating this for some time to induce harmonious conditions ; then came a half hour's meditation, followed by reading of the Scriptures with comment. As Swami sat on the raised seat, chanting, reading or absorbed in meditation, his presence emanated an atmosphere of calm and holiness which pervaded the hearts and minds of all bringing them under its benign influence. Sitting there, revealed by the dim light of the lamp, against the background of the deep shadows of the great oak, he made a picture never to be forgotten by those whom the Mother's grace had brought to this holy place and hour.

Shortly before sunrise Swami gave rhythmic breathing exercises to satisfy the desire of a number, but strongly cautioned against their use without his permission. As he gave the exercises Swami asked the students to observe that during meditation the breath regulated itself without any help whatever. If our minds were pure, this would be the natural state of breathing.

As the sun flashed his first beams of light into their watching vision, Swami chanted an invocation, after which he asked the class to again close their eyes in meditation and

endeavour to visualize the sun rising through the Sushumna canal, stopping at the different centres as far as the centre at the bridge of the nose. Then all arose, the men retiring to a distance again, while the women took the path to their quarters. When they had reached their section, the women stood and sang a very beautiful song, composed by Mrs. Petersen (Dhirananda), "O Divine Mother, we are Thy Children," after which the men sang a selected devotional song, and all separated to take up their various duties.

From this year on Swami did all the cooking, assisted by some of the men in the preparation of the vegetables and setting the table. The women washed the dishes and kept the dining room and kitchen in spotless cleanliness. Swami was an expert and versatile cook and a number of the students for the first time in their lives, enjoyed the experience of partaking of Indian dishes. While Swami did not cater to taste and the food as a whole was of a substantial and nourishing character, yet a variety of delicious curries, soups and chutneys found their way to the table, to the astonishment of those who had never heard of anything more from India than rice and cocoanuts.

The meals were now held in the main dining room and on a small raised platform built at one end of the room was placed a table for Swami's books and from which he conducted the spiritual services of the meals. The Swami ate his own meal at this table following which he commenced the reading of the Gita with comments. After each reading, as after some of the classes, opportunity was offered for questions and answers. This often proved to be as profitable individually as the reading itself.

His labors were incessant, often lasting far into the night. Sometimes the light in his window could be seen burning all night long. Swami was always the ideal Sannyasin ; despising ease and luxury for himself he set a constant example that inspired every disciple to follow to their utmost capacity.

Beginning with this year also, the women and men sat at different tables and this rule followed in everything.

It was pointed out to Swami that the Dhuni Giri was not the highest hill on the Ashrama ; one nearby was considerably higher. Swami thereupon set several of the men to clear a trail to the top and with appropriate ceremonies the new hill was duly dedicated on the first auspicious night. The name, Siddha Giri "Hill of Realization"—was given and thereafter all the Dhuni nights were held there.

As stated, Swami, in spite of rheumatism and other physical troubles, kept alive a spirit of fun and constant cheerfulness, in order to relax any tension which might result from the unaccustomed hours and mode of living. He also saw that all received sufficient exercise according to the individual need and capacity.

From the beginning the rule had been established by Swami that no form of flesh food should be indulged in at the Ashrama,—the diet was to be strictly vegetarian. To make this rule clear to all the students and for visitors to the Ashrama, he had a sign painted and placed on the entrance gate, stating that no form of flesh food was allowed on the Ashrama grounds, also that firearms and shooting were prohibited.

The prohibiting of shooting on the Ashrama grounds from very early days had made it a Mecca for many forms of bird life and small wild animals. Qail and rabbits were especially numerous and, not being molested, began to lose any fear of human beings. This became evident when attempts were made to start a garden, which in that region was always somewhat of a problem, owing to sudden frosts. It seemed as though the word had been passed along to all the rabbits and ground squirrels, which came with their families, regarding the garden as a dispensation of Providence for their especial benefit. The garden suffered heavily and was at times almost completely ruined, but the introduction of a dog and several cats on the Ashrama and the use of various other means finally gave them the hint that their presence was not desired and the garden has to-day become one of the institutions of the Ashrama, containing numbers of varieties of vegetables and fruits. In years when sufficient rain falls, hay is raised for winter feed.

Swami's frequently expressed instruction was that the spiritual life was a natural one and that it should be developed by authorized spiritual practices, suited to one's own nature. Questions arose from time to time regarding occult practices, but Swami, while giving an answer, said that such practices, aside from being unnecessary, were also harmful and should never be indulged in. The minds of all, however, seemed to be like an open book to Swami and individuals found that their inmost motives and actions had become known to him and more than one were checked in rash impulses and extremes of conduct. Others, during the time of meditation, received spiritual visions and felt themselves translated into a different world.

Those who were privileged to attend the Ashrama classes

regularly, found the same rule prevailing there as in all other concerns of life, that the benefit they received was in direct ratio to their interest and inward zeal. Very few could forget their unique experience there ; and they found the desire ever recurring in their minds to renew their visits and spiritual experience. As the years passed by, the wisdom and judgment of the Swami Vivekananda in accepting and dedicating the land to the purposes of an Ashrama became increasingly evident, and blessings will be multiplied to the donor as those who come through future years find peace in their souls and receive in that hallowed spot the bread of life from the hands of the spiritual sons of Sri Ramakrishna.

REVIEW

A SON OF MOTHER INDIA ANSWERS by *Dhan Gopal Mukerji*.
Published by E. P. Dutton and Co., New York, U. S. A.

When the controversy regarding *Mother India* seems to be waning in India, a really stimulating criticism of the book hails from America in Dhan Gopal Mukerji's *A Son of Mother India Answers*. In this small book Mukerji is eminently successful in what he sets out to do. Without dealing with Miss Mayo's individual contentions—that would have been to repeat her mistakes and weary the reader with polemics at fourth hand—he combats and thoroughly and effectively exposes the hollowness of her chief and preposterous generalisations; her minor accusations necessarily fall to the ground. Some things we hold essentially sacred and probably do not know the reasons why we do so; they are subconscious. We are at sea naturally when such things are tried to be assailed by the root; and this is exactly what Miss Mayo has tried to do. But our author in his turn has carried the warfare to the assailant's camp and comes out the winner in the most honourable sense.

It is really good that Mukerji has accepted this task. He is eminently fitted for this. He combines in himself the best traditions of Eastern and Western culture; one inborn and the other imbibed, but both are equally telling in him. Consequently when championing the cause of one, he does not play false to the other.

Still there is nothing strikingly new or original in his exposition; only his words breathe a spirit of sincerity with a total want of rancour or animosity towards the authoress or her country, and that is striking. The book is impressive in its manner as well as in its matter; its qualities are qualities of presentation. It is not ungenerous in its choice of ground—qualities which will increase his reputation as a master of dialectic.

We recommend the book to the people of our country and abroad. It is a model of what such answers should be.

There is a serious printing mistake in the second line of the foot-note on page 51. 1.83 years should be 18.3 years.

MISS MAYO'S MOTHER INDIA : A REJOINDER by K. Natarajan, with an introduction by Hon. G. A. Nateson. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Sunkurama Chetty Street, Madras. Price As. 12.

We carefully read the pamphlet when it first appeared serially in the pages of *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay. We have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the best answers given to *Mother India*. The writer has very carefully and conscientiously controverted Miss Mayo's grotesque (and as we believe) deliberate misstatements. We wish the author had written a more elaborate and complete reply and had it published in England and America where alone such a reply can produce the best results in favour of India. It is pleasant to note that Mr. Natarajan does not decry religion but considers it on the other hand as the most effective means of social regeneration.

SISTER INDIA. To be had of Chester Green, 88 Washington Avenue, Cambridge, U. S. A. Price 5 cents.

It is a pamphlet of 12 pages containing quotations from various sources refuting the gross misstatements of *Mother India*. The pamphlet is very nicely conceived and is bound to be effective if largely circulated.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot

The following report has been received by us for publication from Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot, Kathiawar :

By the grace of God our Ashrama has completed one year of its life (March, 1927—February, 1928). On this anniversary day with mixed feelings of joy and gratitude, we convey our sincerest thanks to all those who have helped us with money and in various other ways, and hope that they will continue the same patronage, sympathy and support.

This Ashrama, a branch centre of the Ramakrishna Mission, has tried in its humble way, to live and preach Vedanta as interpreted by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda by making renunciation and service its motto.

It will not be exaggerating if we say that within the short period of one year of its existence, the Ashrama has proved its usefulness by its silent activities. We shall try and give here a short account of the work done.

1. Discourses on Vedanta philosophy and religion were conducted regularly thrice a week in the Ashrama ; and the following books were studied in that connection :—Gita, Isha, Katha, Kena, Prashna and Mundaka Upanishads, as well as Swami Vivekananda's Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

2. A series of class talks were given to the upper standard students of the Saurashtra and the Alfred High Schools, explaining, through fables, stories and anecdotes, the fundamentals of the Hindu religion, especially the duties of student life.

3. In March, 1927, under the auspices of this Ashrama, Swami Madhavananda, the ex-President of the Adwaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, who is now in charge of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A., delivered a lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna at the Connaught Hall, and then again in May last the Ashrama availed of the presence here of Swami Sambuddhananda, a monk of Ramakrishna Ashrama, Khar, Bombay, and organised a lecture on Practical Vedanta at the same place.

4. The Ashrama, as it stands for the unity and harmony of all religions, celebrated the birthdays of Buddha, Sri Krishna, Jesus Christ and other world-teachers, and thus tried to promote universal brotherhood and fellow-feeling amongst the people.

5. The Ashrama, according to its small means, helped some poor deserving students with money. One boy reading in the 4th standard of the Alfred High School got help of Rs. 6 a month since August last, and another boy reading in the 6th standard of the Saurashtra High School got help of Rs. 2 a month since February last.

Lastly, in co-operation with the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Khar, Bombay, this Ashrama conducted relief-work for over five months in Cambay, Baroda and British territories affected by the last disastrous flood. At a time when the roads were completely washed off and rendered all the more impassable on account of thorns and brambles, and the people were in the grip of an indescribable distress, prompt relief was brought to the doors of all, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Centres after centres were opened reaching succour even to the remotest villages on either side of the Sabarmati, and the whole area relieved covered about 300 square miles. The work of relief consisted in feeding the unfed, clothing the naked, distributing seeds, grain, and medicine free, opening cheap grain-shops, and finally in building nearly 1000 decent huts for the homeless ones. The money spent for this relief-work came up to nearly Rs. 40,000, a detailed account of which is expected to be published shortly.

This is the long and short of the humble service rendered by the Ashrama. God willing and circumstances permitting we hope the Ashrama will be able to extend its scope of work in the near future and prove to be a source of great good to the people. We can picture in our mind's eye a time when the whole of Kathiawar will be honey-

combed with sister institutions with this Ashrama as the centre, ministering to the physical, intellectual and spiritual needs of all.—May God help us to see that day!

Bankura Famine Relief.

The Secy., R. K. Mission, sends out the following report and appeal :—

The public are already aware from press reports that several districts of Bengal are in the grip of a terrible famine. Harrowing tales of starvation, disease, suicide and sale of children are reaching our ears. The pathetic conditions of Bankura, Birbhum and Dinajpur can scarcely be exaggerated. We have started relief work in Bankura; but our funds are depleted and we have not till now received more than Rs. 5,000/- from the public. The rains are imminent and we must stock sufficient quantity of rice before rains set in. We also want cloths.

Our work is rapidly increasing. Last week we served 103 villages and 1114 persons by giving away 58 mds. 8 seers of rice. The work must increase still more. The help we have till now rendered is very small in proportion to the needs and sufferings of the people. Immediately we are going to open two more centres. We therefore earnestly appeal to the rich and the poor alike to help us to their utmost by sending cash and cloths to the following addresses : (1) *President, R. K. Mission, P.O. Belur-math, Howrah, Bengal*; (2) *Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta*; and (3) *Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktarām Babu Street, Calcutta.*

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वराहबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

AUGUST, 1928.

No. 8.

RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SIXTH LESSON

The Sushumna: It is very useful to meditate on the Sushumna. You may have a vision of it come to you and this is the best way. Then meditate on that for a long time. It is a very fine, very brilliant thread,—this living passage through the spinal chord, this way of salvation through which we have to make the Kundalini rise.

In the language of the Yogi, the Sushumna has its end in two lotuses,—the lower lotus surrounds the triangle of the Kundalini and the upper one is in the brain surrounding the pineal-gland. Between these two are four other lotuses, stages on the way :

- Sixth* : Pineal-gland.
- Fifth* : Between the eyes.
- Fourth* : Bottom of the throat.
- Third* : Level with the heart.
- Second* : Opposite the navel.
- First* : Base of the spine.*

* Swamiji here omits to mention the *Svādhisthāna Chakra*, supposed to be situated above the first chakra.—Ed.

We must awaken the Kundalini, then slowly raise it from one lotus to another till the brain is reached. Each stage corresponds to a new layer of the mind.†

THE PRAYER BOOK CRISIS

By THE EDITOR.

During the last few months *Reuter* has cabled various items of news to the Indian press concerning the revised Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. It is possible that the majority of Indian readers have not thought much over their significance. The revision was rejected last December by the House of Commons and again in last June. What this portends to Christianity in England may not be without its interest to us in India.

The phrase Prayer Book should not be understood in a literal sense. For, besides what we generally call prayer, it contains also directions for services, doctrines, articles of faith, directions for observances, etc. The Prayer Book is really a *Smriti* for the guidance of the Church of England. Its origin was naturally due to the secession of England from the Roman Catholic Church. Before Protestantism came into being, all Christians except those who belonged to the Eastern Church, were under the rule of Rome, though it is true Roman Catholicism itself had and has its various schools. But when England defied the authority of the Pope, it felt the necessity of having its own special religious doctrines, observances and devotions. As a result the First Prayer Book was published in 1549 during the reign of Edward VI. It remained in use till 1552. In that year the Prayer Book was revised and reformed into what is spoken of as the Second Prayer Book of King Edward the VI. King Edward died in 1553 and Queen Mary came to the throne of England. She was of Roman Catholic persuasion, and she abolished the English Prayer Book and restored the Latin missal. Hers however was a short reign. She died in 1558 and another change of policy took place. The reformed Prayer Book came into use again, with various modifications, in 1559. During the reign of James I, the Prayer Book was again revised

† *Six Lessons on Raja Yoga* can be had of the *Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta*, whose courtesy enabled us to publish this in *P. B.*—Ed.

in 1604, and again after the restoration of Charles II in 1662. This last revision is in use to-day though there have been various slight changes in recent years. It must be admitted that a thorough revision is overdue. The various changes in the past and the necessity of another change in the present must appear quite natural to a Hindu. For Hindus are quite alive to the necessity of Smritis adjusting themselves to the changing needs and spirits of ages, and as we have pointed out, the English Prayer Book is nothing but the Englishmen's Smriti.

What however is the immediate reason of the present revision? It is the question of discipline in the Church. No doubt it will appear a bit queer to the Indian reader. So long as all believed in God and in Christ, the Hindu may ask, what is the necessity of insisting on the uniformity of faith and practice? A diversity in inessentials is rather more helpful than uniformity, knowing as we do the diversity of human nature. The Christian does not think so. The Church of England does not think so. It wants all its flock to follow the beaten track and not to stray away to other pastures however delectable the prospects might be. But human nature cannot be strait-jacketed in this fashion. Naturally therefore various customs, opinions and practices have crept into the Anglican Church, which are not confirmed by the 1662 Prayer Book. What is to be done with these doctrines and practices? Should the Church of England authorities turn a blind eye to them, or scrutinize and deal with them? Evidently the first alternative has no longer been possible. Hence the revision.

What are those alien practices? The trouble mainly lies with what is known as Anglo-Catholicism or as it used to be called, the High Church Party. The Anglo-Catholics have been steadily gaining ground within the Anglican Church. The word Anglo-Catholic should not be taken literally,—it does not mean an English Roman Catholic ; it means one who believes in the Catholic traditions and yet belongs to the Anglican Church. The claim of the Anglo-Catholics is that the Church of England is not of independent origin and disconnected from the Catholic tradition. They repudiate any break with that tradition at the time of the Reformation. They hold that the Church of England never rejected the early doctrine of the real presence in the sacrament in communion and other Catholic doctrines. It is this communion service which has proved the storm centre in the present controversy. A few words in explanation of the doctrine of real presence in the sacrament in communion may be helpful to the Indian readers. Christians

believe, at least the Roman Catholics do, that as Christ washed away the sins of the world by being crucified, with the sacrifice of his body and blood, so if they take his blood and flesh, they will also be purified. Of course the original blood and flesh are not available. Now they can have only substitutes,—wine and bread. The communion service is the consecration of the bread and wine and partaking thereof by the faithful. The Catholics hold that when certain formulas, *mantrams*, are uttered on them, they become impregnated with the real presence of the Christ. A partaking of them, then, cleanses all sins and fills one with spiritual exaltation. This doctrine of the eucharist has proved very troublesome throughout the history of Christianity. The question has been raised again and again: How can ordinary pieces of bread and drops of wine become filled with the Holy Spirit and be converted into the actual body and blood of Christ by the simple process of an invocation? How can the material constituents of bread and wine become spiritual substances? Here is the tremendous difficulty. Of course the Christians cannot take recourse to the pantheistic doctrines; for that will create more troublesome intricacies in regard to other articles of faith. Anyhow the Roman Catholics have sought by means of hair-splitting philosophies to find proofs of this transubstantiation. Protestants have not yet found any rational justification for such a belief.

To a Hindu, the doctrine of the eucharist will not appear quite strange. He also believes in the spiritual efficacy of *prasada*, the food offered to God. How a food which does not seem to have undergone the slightest change as a result of being offered, can yet assume a supreme spiritual efficacy, was not quite clear until Sri Ramakrishna spoke of an experience of his. He found, while worshipping the Mother Kali at the Dakshineswar temple in the early days of his *sadhana*, that whenever he offered any food to the Mother, a luminous ray shot from her eyes and touched the food so as to take its essence. If this experience of Sri Ramakrishna is relied on,—and there is no reason why it should not be, for it has been confirmed by the experiences of other *sadhakas* also,—the peculiar spirituality of the sacramental food is at once explained. Of course the doctrine of the eucharist is not exactly our doctrine of the *prasada*. There is a difference. In the doctrine of *prasada*, there is, besides the idea of the purifying effect of the offered food on the partaker, the further idea of the close communion between God and man, implied in their both partaking of the same food;—of course this is more or

less subconscious. In the doctrine of the eucharist, the further element is the idea of the identity of man and Christ. When the Christian partakes of the body and blood of Christ, they as it were identify their own body and blood with Christ's;—this physical identification naturally and automatically induces the mind to coincide itself with the mind of the Christ. This is a process of very efficacious meditation.* This implied identity of man and Christ in the communion service cannot but be spiritually exalting. We do not know if this interpretation of ours is acceptable to the faithful. It is quite possible they do not consciously think in the indicated way. But psychologically and subconsciously, the communion is bound to have some such effect. And surely such an interpretation of the eucharist may not be quite useless in the present analytical age.

Anyhow, the Church of England does not believe in the theory of transubstantiation. But the Anglo-Catholics who believe in it, are growing in number; and there are, we are told, 600 churches in England to-day, in which there is continuous reservation of the sacrament (i.e., retaining after a celebration a portion of the eucharistic elements, especially the bread, for devotion or for the communion of the absent and the sick) with adoration of the real presence. This reservation of the sacrament is being most hotly resented by the orthodox Anglicans. In many of those churches, there is full Catholic ritual, with confession, prayers to the Virgin Mary and celibacy of the clergy. All these have steadily developed since John Henry Newman, afterwards Cardinal Newman, started the Oxford movement in early Victorian days. Now they threaten to capture the Church of England or at least to create a serious split in it. So long the bishops of the Church of England have not interfered with these developments. In fact some of them have favoured them. The Bishop of London, we are told, along with many other bishops, is in deep sympathy with this

* Cf. the following well-known song of Ramprasad :

"Now I will eat thee, Mother.

"I was born under the inauspicious junction of stars, called *ganda*, and one so born, they say, eat's one's own mother. Now either thou must eat me or I will eat thee,—it must be an action to the finish.

"I will eat thy handmaidens, making a curry of them; and of thy garland of heads I will make a delectable acid preparation.

"I will smear my hands, face and entire body with *Kali* (meaning also *ink*); and I will throw it on the face of Death when he will come to mind me.

"But though I say I will eat thee, I shall not put thee in my stomach;—I will instal thee on the lotus of my heart and offer thee mental worship. . . . "

Catholic revival. But they can no longer have a smooth passage. The Evangelicals or the Low Church Party are in revolt against these Anglo-Catholics. They want disciplinary action.

Of course under the circumstances, the Church could not take stringent measures. It could only try for a compromise and see that there may not be further Catholic developments. The revised Prayer Book, in the words of the Bishop of Gloucester, is "not to give a basis of wide comprehensiveness between the Evangelical and Catholic tradition of the Church of England, but to define the limit of that comprehensiveness." We have mentioned that the main cause of difference between the two parties lies in the Anglo-Catholic reservation of the sacrament and affirmation of the real presence with all the ritual that it involves. The revised Prayer Book has sought to restrict both these. The old Book has been left intact ; but various new rubrics state clearly what may or may not be done. The reservation of the sacrament is allowed "only for the communion of the sick" and "to be used for no other purpose whatever." The practice of fasting before communion is pronounced as "an ancient and laudable custom," but this problem is left "to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

These limitations have displeased the Anglo-Catholics, and the revised Prayer Book has received little support from them. Nor has the revised Book satisfied the Evangelicals, because it countenances practices and doctrines which they think are against the Scripture and the spirit of the Reformed Church. Thus has it been rejected twice by the House of Commons and there is no likelihood that it will be presented to it a third time in an amended form. What will result from this? Probably anarchy. Some would use the Book of 1662, some the Book passed by the Church Assembly in 1927 or 1928, many would follow whatever doctrines and practices they like without obeying any authority, and quite probably, Anglo-Catholicism will grow apace. The Prayer Book controversy has revealed that Protestant orthodoxy is quite strong in England, and that religious liberalism is not quite so abundant there as is generally thought. Of course they are not breaking each other's head. But the mental narrowness remains ; resentment is growing, and we are almost reminded of the intellectual atmosphere of the Reformation days.

This fighting on inessentials may appear a bit ludicrous. But we must not forget that the present Church controversy is not wholly a religious one. There is also a political element.

The Anglo-Catholics, as we have remarked before, want the Church of England to fall in a line with the older Catholic tradition. They are even prepared to acknowledge the Pope as the Chief Bishop of the Catholic Church which, according to them, should include the Church of England and allow it internal liberty ; but of course they are not ready to recognise the Pope's claim to infallibility. Now this is a serious proposition to liberty-loving England. The Pope is not merely the spiritual instructor. He is the master of the salvation of all Roman Catholics. He can send one to heaven or hell at his sweet will ; and as history shows, he has not been always scrupulous in the exercise of his will. Besides, Roman Catholicism is full of rigidity and dogmatism. In fact Papacy and Roman Catholicism seems as a nightmare to a free and rational mind. We do admit there are many beautiful things in Roman Catholicism. It is more deeply spiritual than Protestantism. It believes in mystic realisation, in chastity, austerity, in sadhana, without which spiritual life is a mockery. Protestantism, in trying to be rational and liberal and allow greater freedom to its votaries, has deprived itself of some of the fundamentals of spiritual life. Spiritual realisation is not a matter of rationalism and liberalism only. There must be the emphasis on the qualifications for mystic realisation, which is unfortunately lacking in Protestantism. A combination of the two aspects is essentially necessary for religion to be effective and true. Now, the Anglo-Catholic movement is exciting in the English mind the fear of Papal and Roman Catholic tyranny. It is afraid that if Anglo-Catholicism is allowed to grow in influence, it may eventually re-establish the authority of the Pope over the Church of England and necessarily on the politics of England,—a prospect which no Englishman can view with equanimity ; and in this all reasonable persons will sympathise with him.

Nevertheless Anglo-Catholicism is making a profound appeal to a large section of the English people. We have mentioned that it has 600 churches all over England. Referring to them, the Bishop of Southwark acknowledges that "among them are to be found some of the most living churches in the land. . . . We should be careful that no act of ours drives these earnest Christians out of the Anglican communion." The success of these churches is generally acknowledged by all observers of English religious life. The condition of the Anglican churches, on the other hand, is manifestly deplorable. "Other churches," says a distinguished English writer, "in which there is less ritual and no mysticism are empty and dead." "Many Anglican



clergymen," he further observes, "liberal in view, undogmatic, Protestant only in protesting against intolerance and authority, try to keep their congregations together by whist drives, boys' clubs, social entertainments and vague idealism in human brotherhood."

What is this difference due to? What are the causes of this religious crisis in England? The enquiry leads us to the central weaknesses of Christianity. Christianity is in a dilemma and the Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals crudely represent two sides of it. It is a war between mysticism and science and the salvation of Christianity lies in reconciling them, and not in electing one in exclusion of the other.

Science has bred a new spirit and a new outlook in the Western men and women. Its methods are rational and experimental, and its basis correctly gathered data, experience. There is no place of faith or authority in it. How true and beneficial the scientific outlook is, is evidenced by the tremendous hold it has on the human mind to-day. None can gainsay its power and claim. Before the advancement of science, all dogmas are flying in alarm. The modern mind with its scientific training in all other branches of knowledge, cannot put up with dogmatism and unproved articles of faith in religion alone. Religion also must be scientific. Unfortunately Christian beliefs are scarcely in accord with the findings of science. Christianity lacks a scientific cosmology. It does not explain the mysteries of life. It does not visualise man in his true place in the scheme of the universe. It does not explain the mysteries of spiritual life in a scientific spirit. Its spiritual and cultural outlook is narrow. It does not recognise the universality of truth and its variegated expression. All these deficiencies naturally make it unfit for the enlightened men and women of the present age, with their rational outlook and scientific training. Let us take the case of creation. We know the Christian theory of creation has no similarity to the conclusions of science. Christians must believe either in their Bible or in the scientific theories. They cannot be faithful to both. As a matter of fact, in spite of Fundamentalism and all that, no rational individual can defy science. Yet the rejection of the Biblical theory of creation cuts at the very root of Christianity which has for one of its foundations the belief in the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ for his salvation. The rejection of this belief means a tremendous revolution in the Christian doctrines. Alas, the rapid progress of knowledge has made this revolution inevitable. For the past twenty years, specially since the war, the English

clergy have been gradually rationalising their teaching to bring it in a line with science and modern criticism. The clergy themselves have found it hard to subscribe to most of their official doctrines. The case of Bishop Barnes, F.R.S., the bold upholder of Darwinism in the English Church, is well-known. This gradual development has naturally led Christians to an attitude of agnosticism and indifference towards the religion of Christ. The Anglican churches have thus dug their own grave.

But we must not forget that though it is quite good and necessary to be scientific in one's outlook and attitude, science has unfortunately investigated as yet very little of the universe of reality, with the *whole* of which man is concerned. Science has touched just the fringe of the human mind. The infinite spiritual world remains yet uninvestigated. But man cannot wait for the tardy process of science. The heart yearns for the Divine. There is no peace in the external world merely. In spite of all the progress of science, how little man knows, how little he has! The hunger of the heart must be appeased. The visible and the rational are not enough for it. It cries for the unknown, and the unknown and the eternal it must have, be it through science or in spite of it. This is the position of a large section of Christians. To them the authoritative declarations of the Catholic Church, its mysticism and ritual naturally appeal. These promise to satisfy their hunger. Not that the Catholic beliefs are found scientific and rational. Their main charm is their mysticism and definiteness. Protestantism has no fixed authority, it is changing and uncertain. It is too clear and open and it falls too short of the heart's expectations. Besides, science itself is pointing towards a vast mysterious world behind the visible and explainable world. This has added to the apparent charm of Roman Catholic doctrines and practices. Scientific or unscientific, these are anyhow satisfying many discontented souls.

Unfortunately, Anglo-Catholicism, in our opinion, is partly a reactionary movement. There can be no peace for man in the present age, unless he rationalises his faith. No blind submission to and observance of any doctrine or practice, however mysterious or mystical, can be permanently successful. Doubts will assail, questions will raise themselves; and there will be insistent demand for systematising the whole of life and the universe of knowledge. The natural and the supernatural both must be looked upon as parts of a unitary scheme. That is to say, religion also must be made scientific if we are to escape

from eventual scepticism. Has Anglo-Catholicism been made so? Has it found scientific explanations for its faiths and practices? So far as we are aware, it has not. It must face facts boldly, without bias, without fear. Then only will its mysticism be well established and beyond doubt and question.

But when it has done so, certain changes are bound to come about. Whenever we estimate any fact or phenomenon scientifically, it loses its uniqueness. The only unique substance is God, all others are subject to systematisation. That means that there being other religions, Christianity must become only *one* of many creeds ; its beliefs would not appear as infallible ; and there would be no reason for fixity of forms and dogmas. It will come to know that the same spiritual results can be reached through diverse means, and it need not insist on a certain fixed set of rules. It will recognise the same principle as is being recognised in other departments of life, that each individual is differently constituted and has different needs, different ways of action and a different outlook ; and that therefore there need not be and cannot be a uniform religion for all. It will also find out the true place of a Christ in the scheme of man's spiritual life. That most ignorant doctrine that Christ is the only saviour will fall to the ground. It will discover that there are also other saviours who can be as helpful to some as Christ will be to others. It will not insist on what it calls 'revelation,' the true significance of which it at present little understands, and will not continue with the impossible struggle of reconciling the Bible with the discoveries of science ; for it will feel that the authority of a Book is not so urgent in religion as it considers now. These and other similar changes are bound to come on Christianity. Of course it may be asked if Christianity should then be called Christianity. That is a question which it is best to leave to time to answer.

But if Christianity should continue, in whatever altered form, it must face this crucial problem unflinchingly. On this its very existence depends. Protestantism is losing ground, because its rationalism and liberalism have stopped short of the full task. It must penetrate deeper and must rationalise the supernatural also. For man is essentially a spiritual being. A creed that is engrossed in empty talk is no good and will be cast aside by man. Mystical creeds also must equally rationalise their mysticism. For though no doubt practices so long as they are sincerely done will have some spiritual effect on the votaries, they must in the long run lose their attraction and influence

unless they are scientifically conceived. For it is also true that man is a mental being, and mind ever seeks unity of knowledge.

There is no doubt that what we have said above has occurred to the enlightened minds of the West. They are also no doubt seeking for the light, and God is everywhere and no sincere effort will ever go in vain. But we would warn in this connection a section of missionary enthusiasts who lay the flattering unction to their soul that one day the whole world will come to the feet of Christ. We find such Christian missionaries in abundance in India. Of late some of them have raised the hope that although *Christianity* has failed here, *Christ* may yet succeed. We hear of comparisons and contrasts and eventual triumph of the Man of Sorrows among the world's saints and prophets. Foolish dream! They forget that it is not the ideal that always triumphs in the spiritual life of man. Christ may be the greatest of Incarnations (of which of course there are great doubts). But even the greatest Incarnation can be of little help if the *power* that he heralded into the world in his life-time has worked itself out. This fact is scarcely considered by Christian missionaries. "The coins of the Mughal times are no longer current in the Company's rule," said Sri Ramakrishna in explaining that each Incarnation has his own age during which he is particularly potent. Hindus believe that one Incarnation cannot be enough for all ages. First of all, of course, there is the psychological difficulty. The ideas and outlooks represented by an Incarnation in a particular age do not hold good in a subsequent distant age. But there is the more essential fact that it is not merely the perfection of doctrines or personality that constitutes the substance of an Avatara, but his *power*, the power that he manifests into the world. That power acts for some centuries with vigour and then loses in spiritual potency. Then, however much we may iterate his message and hold up his personality before people, they will not be sufficiently effective. The Hindus therefore expect a new Avatara in each age, not so much for a new message or personality as for a new influx of Divine power into the world. Christ therefore has no such chance in the world as the missionaries fondly dream of. Hinduism is not losing its spiritual potency, because it is being blessed by Divine Incarnations from age to age, and is therefore knowing no want of Divine power. It must not be forgotten in this connection that the efficacy of a religion does not truly lie in curing physical ailments, imparting secular knowledge, or teaching sanitation or industry. These are excellent things in themselves. But we must not

confuse them with religion. The true purpose of religion is to make men *realise* themselves as pure spirit, Divine, beyond body and mind, *see* God face to face. And that potency of religion is possible only through the influx of Divine power through God-men. If Christianity is to triumph in the world, let it give birth to such God-men. One of the principal functions of Hinduism, we may note, is to produce these Divine personalities, that is to say, to prepare favourable conditions for their birth and growth.

We have so far spoken of *what* Christianity should do in its present crisis ; we have not said anything of *how* that is to be done. But need we do so at all ? Is not the whole of Hinduism a luminous answer to this crying question ?

A LETTER OF ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[The following letter was written by M. Rolland to Swami Shivananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.—*Ed.*]

12th September, 1927.

DEAR AND RESPECTED SWAMI SHIVANANDA,

Allow a Frenchman who profoundly admires Sri Ramakrishna, to address himself to you who had the good fortune to be his personal disciple.

A year ago, my sister, Madeline Rolland, and myself read the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* and other publications which have been dedicated to him by the Advaita Ashrama. I want to make known in the West that divine source of love and light. Nothing is more necessary to the humanity of our time than this revelation of the harmonious unity of all religious faiths, than this communion with God, manifold in form and yet Himself without form, who is the Being of all living beings.

But it is an extremely delicate task to translate (that is to say, to transpose) into a Western book a personality so fundamentally Indian as that of Sri Ramakrishna. For, some of his religious experiences would be incomprehensible to almost the entire European public, and will even run the risk of concealing the most essential qualities of his life and thought, which could be of powerful assistance to it. That is why I am proceeding

slowly ; I am waiting until there appears in myself a living and true harmony of the work which I wish to write.

It is very precious to me to be able to communicate directly with you who saw with your own eyes this extraordinary man. Our epoch, too intellectualistic as it is, has a tendency to doubt the human existence of all the superhuman personalities of history. Even when it pretends to respect the lofty ideals, of which they were the torches, it sees in them only symbols created by the spirit of a race and of an age ; one sees to-day those who deny that Jesus or Buddha had ever existed. It will not be slow in doing the same for Sri Ramakrishna, if his living witnesses do not leave in writing the proof of his life amongst them on the earth. I should like to make known to the European public your direct testimony.

I wish also to ask you some enlightenment on an important question : the problem of suffering with Ramakrishna. I have read lately an excellent article in *Prabuddha Bharata* on the question of "service" with Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, in which it was maintained that the great disciple had only drawn out the consequences of his Master's teachings,—of his "adoration of the Divine in men," and that there was no disagreement between them. But it appears to me that the more essential feature of the personality of Vivekananda was the mournful and heroic obsession of universal suffering and of evil to fight against or to console. Is it not the same central idea, quite different from the universal Divine Vision, which filled Ramakrishna with ecstasy of joy and with great faith in the Eternal ? What was his attitude with regard to the cruel injustices of Nature and of society, of unfortunate people, and of those who are oppressed or persecuted ? Was he content simply to love them ? Did he not seek to help them ? And has he not precisely destined his great disciple Vivekananda to that work ?

Believe me, dear Swami Shivananda,

Yours affectionately,
ROMAIN ROLLAND.

BUDDHISM

By PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN, M.A.

George V Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University

Buddha, the founder of the religion, is one of the noblest figures in the history of the world. A mass of legends has

naturally grown round his person and there are some who even maintain that his whole life from birth to death was a legend. But it may be accepted that Buddha was a prince born to luxury who in the prime of life withdrew into solitude and sought truth through meditation.

It was an age of intellectual ferment. A congeries of conflicting theories and guesses accepted by some and denied by others, changing with men, reflecting the individual whims and wishes filled the air (see *Brahmajala sutta*). Struck by the clashing enthusiasm, and the discordant systems, Buddha inferred the futility of metaphysical speculation. In the world of morals, ceremonial observances displaced moral obligations. In the sphere of religion, primitive superstitions lifted up their heads and were being exploited by the interested. Buddha declared that each man could gain salvation for himself without the mediation of priests or reference to gods. Salvation did not depend on the acceptance of doubtful dogmas or doing deeds of darkness to appease angry deities, but on the perfection of character and devotion to the good. An aversion to metaphysical speculation, an absence of theological tendency and an ethical earnestness mark Buddha's teaching.

METAPHYSICS : The four truths which Buddha announced are that there is suffering, that it has a cause, that it can be suppressed and that there is a way to accomplish. There is suffering because all things are transient. All being is in a state of perpetual becoming. Life is a series of becomings and extinctions. Whatever be the duration of any state of being, as brief as a flash of lightning or as long as a millennium, yet all is becoming. While Buddha distinguishes the momentary (*ksanika*) character of mental processes from the impermanent (*anitya*) character of non-mental reality, later Buddhists regard all existence as momentary. Each single phenomenon is but a link in the chain, a transitory phase of evolution and the several chains constitute the one whole (*dharmadhatu*). Substances and souls are reduced to sequences and processes.

If we think of things rather than processes, we are dealing with unrealities. We build a seemingly stable universe through logical relations of substance and attribute, whole and part, cause and effect. These relations are true of our logical world and not of the real. We are naturally led to imagine a permanent core for things though it is an abstraction of thinking. We say it rains while there is no 'it' at all. There is nothing but movement, no *doer* but *deed*. We mistake continuity of

becoming for identity of agents. A child, a boy, a youth, a man and an old man are one. The seed and the tree are one. Continuous succession gives the appearance of an unbroken identity, even as a glowing stick whirled round gives the appearance of a complete circle. A useful convention makes us give names to the individual series. The identity of name persuades us to the thought of the identity of the inner reality.

The continuity of the world in the absence of a permanent substratum is explained by means of the principle of universal causation. A thing is only a dharma, a cause or a condition. "That being present, this becomes ; from the arising of that this arises ; that being absent this does not become ; from the cessation of that this ceases" (Majjhima N. II. 32). It is the doctrine of *pratityasamutpada* or dependent origination. There is no being which changes ; there is only a self-changing. The world series is not a series of extinctions and fresh creations. One state transmits its *paccayasatti* (causal energy) to the next. There is a cohesion of the past with the present which is broken up into a succession of before and after in an external treatment of nature.

The world of life and motion obeys a certain order (*niyama*). It is the presence of law in the world process which offers hope to man in distress. Regarding the nature of the world process, different views prevail. The chief tendency, however, is to look upon it as impermanent though not non-existent. There are suggestions of a purely subjectivist nature. "By the undoing of consciousness wholly remainderless all is melted away." The world is a product of ignorance and does not exist for the enlightened soul. Individual forms of the world are sometimes said to be the manifestations of certain unconditioned reals. Composite substances disappear when true knowledge arises leaving behind the primary elements. Buddha was not interested so much in analysing the nature of the world of becoming as in helping us to get out of it. "It is not the time to discuss about fire for those who are actually in burning fire, but it is the time to escape from it."

The individual self is a compound where the component parts, mental (*name*) and material (*rupa*), are ever changing. Feeling (*vedana*), perception (*samjna*), disposition (*samskara*), and intelligence (*viññana*) are the mental factors. Feeling refers to the affectional side, perception and intelligence to the cognitive and disposition to the volitional aspects of mental life. Intelligence sometimes functions as the self. We have no evidence of a permanent self. "When one says 'I' what he

does is that he refers either to all the factors combined or any one of them and deludes himself that that was 'I' " (Samyutta N. III. 130). While Buddha contents himself with a statement about the constituents of the empirical self without explicitly rejecting the existence of a permanent self, Nagasena dismisses the permanent self as an illegitimate abstraction and reduces the self of man to a unified complex exhibiting an unbroken historical continuity. As body is a name for a system of qualities, so soul is a name for the sum total of our mental states.

The conception of the soul retains enough meaning to make rebirth significant. The individual is not a haphazard succession of unconnected phenomena but is a living continuity. The reborn man is not the dead man ; but he is not different from him. There is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference. There is persistent continuity as well as unceasing change. Each experience as it rises and passes leads up to, becomes or ends in another experience, moment or phase of life which sums up the whole past.

ETHICS AND RELIGION: Salvation which consists in the unmaking of ourselves is the goal of life. All forms of conduct which lead to it are regarded as good. The eightfold path—right belief, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right-mindedness and right rapture—represents the morality of Buddhism. It is the middle way between the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. It is intended to transform the whole way of man—intellectual, emotional and volitional.

The institution of caste was in a confused state in the time of Buddha. He undermined the caste spirit by basing brahminhood on conduct rather than on birth. He was not however a social reformer. His main interest was religion. Though professedly open to all, his religion was practically limited to the higher castes. He did not interfere with the domestic ritual which continued to be performed according to the Vedic rites. Buddha's mission was not so much to unveil the secrets of blessedness as to win men to its realisation. Nirvana literally means 'blowing out' or 'cooling'. It is the dying out of hot passion, the destruction of the fires of lust, hatred and ignorance. It is not to be confused with the night of nothingness. It is timeless existence full of "confidence, peace, calm, bliss, happiness, delicacy, purity, freshness" (Milinda, 11.2.9). Yamaka's view of nirvana as annihilation

is repudiated as a heresy (Samyutta N. III. 109 ff). Since its nature is beyond the horizon of human thought, negative terms are used to describe.

We need not regard Buddhism as an entirely fresh start with no roots in the past. It is a later phase of the general movement of thought of which the Upanisads are the earlier. The questions about ultimate reality, the nature of freedom and the permanent character of the self are not answered by Buddha. They are reserved issues on which he does not allow any speculation. He declines to answer Malunkya's questions on the ground that they do not help us in practical life (See also Dialogue of Vaccha). His silence on metaphysical issues is variously interpreted. Some of his early followers and modern interpreters take it negatively. They argue that Buddha did not believe in any permanent reality either cosmic or physical. Nirvana on this view is nothingness. Buddha did not expound the negative view for fear that he might startle his followers. This view makes Buddha's philosophy incoherent and his character suspicious. There are positive statements made by Buddha which are inconsistent with this negative rationalism. Such a barren creed could not have appealed to theistically minded people of Buddha's time. Others hold that his silence was a cloak for his ignorance. He did not know the truth of things. This theory is implausible in view of Buddha's feeling that he was in possession of the truth and could lead men on to it. It is difficult to believe that Buddha himself was ignorant and wished his disciples to remain in ignorance. No thinking man could live without some sort of belief about ultimate values. It seems to be more reasonable to hold that Buddha accepted a positive idealism akin to the thought of the Upanisads, though he did not declare it as his opinion since he insisted on each one's realisation of the truth for oneself. He ignored metaphysical questions, as metaphysical wrangling distracts men from the main business of moral life. It has little to do with the attainment of sanctity which is more spiritual and inward than logical and theoretical. If we do not admit this view it will be difficult to account for the positive descriptions of the state of nirvana and Buddha's consistent refusal to deny the reality of an absolute beyond phenomena. The Benares sermon suggests strongly the reality of an absolute. In view of the obvious limits of the human understanding accepted by the Upanisads and Buddha, the latter refused to give positive accounts of it. But within the limits allowed by logic he describes the ultimate principle as

dharma or righteousness. In the Upanisads, dharma (righteousness) and satya (truth) are identified. Since Buddha's main interest was ethical he emphasised the ethical nature of the absolute. Dharma takes the place of Brahman. (D. N. III. 232. On this question see *Mind*, 1926, pp. 158-174.)

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

CLASSES AND LECTURES AT SAN FRANCISCO

As stated, there were two classes for members in the San Francisco Society every week, a Gita class Monday evening and an Upanishad class Thursday evening. Knowing the value of a knowledge of Sanscrit to the student of Vedanta as a means of reading the Hindu Scriptures in their original tongue and thereby creating an opportunity to immensely advance their spiritual culture, Swami introduced the study of Sanscrit at the close of the Monday evening class.

The method was made as simple as possible, the grammar and construction being taught by means of simple sentences, the sentences gradually increasing in length and complexity, until the subjects covered a wide field. The study was reinforced by a Sanscrit grammar and a standard Sanscrit dictionary, for which Swami had sent on to India. The central theme of study was the Gita, also in Sanscrit, a copy of which was purchased by every student. The class proved to be a great success from the beginning. Swami took advantage of the opportunity to make it a medium of special spiritual instruction and discipline—a diamond mine of spiritual treasure to all whose Karma drew them to that happy hour.

It was at this time that Swami Prakashananda conceived the idea that the day might come when no Swamis would be available, and as a result the work in America might languish, so he suggested to Swami Trigunatita that some of the members of the Society be trained to lecture. Swami approved and a number of students of both sexes were selected according to their qualifications and given the necessary instructions. As soon as they were ready, the Sunday afternoon lecture was given over to them for a beginning.

Swami gave the following instructions to the students for the preparation of a lecture :

HOW TO PREPARE ONE'S OWN LESSON OR LECTURE FOR THE HINDU TEMPLE, ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF APPLICATION OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICAL LIFE. THAT IS, HOW TO MAKE EVEN AN EVIL GOOD BY APPLICATION OF VEDANTA IN DAILY LIFE.

1. The lesson or the lecture is to be taken sincerely and faithfully as a spiritual service and religious practice for one's own spiritual advancement.

2. This service consists of the following points :

(a) Sit in a sincere and prayerful mood.

(b) Make the mind blank. Drive off all the desires and thoughts of the secular side of the work, *i.e.*—success or failure, praise or criticism, etc. Try hard to analyze your mind and search if there be any such desire hidden in any corner of your mind.

It is natural that there will be some desire, without doubt. Being sincere, one must be very faithful on this point of analyzing one's mind and detecting the thieves.

(c) Meditate on God.

(d) Meditate on the subject of the lesson or the lecture.

(e) Then meditate on God and the subject for a few times—a minute or two for each. Then intensely think or meditate on the lesson or the subject of the lecture for a few minutes.

(f) Then offer the lesson or lecture as a sacred sacrifice to God very sincerely, with a view to having it sanctified by the grace of God, and ask God to save and cleanse from all self-seeking.

(g) Meditate that the grace of God is being conferred on the subject of the lesson or lecture.

(h) See that it is being sanctified by His Divine touch. Smear the subject with His grace so that it is fully His—then take it from Him as an object of His grace.

(i) Bow down in the spirit of thankfulness to God for a few minutes and ask for His blessing.

3. This is the service part of the internal ceremony. Then comes the next step—how to prepare the lesson.

4. In the beginning never allow any such thought to enter your mind as consulting a dictionary or books of reference.

5. NOW—for a full half hour meditate on the subject, then again fully offer the subject to God and try to unite it with God. Then, whatever you will get through the inspiration derived from that meditation put down on a piece of paper. This is the beginning of the practice of self-culture in the methods of this kind of platform work.

6. Whenever you do not get any satisfactory point in the preparation of the lesson or lecture, please do not neglect to right away sit and meditate on God instead of resorting to books of reference which are quite secular, after which you will follow the rules of preparation already given.

7. Finally—when you come on the platform to speak, remember that you are talking to God, God is the only audience.

A number of the students developed into good speakers, and some of these same students with others carried on the lectures during the nine months that Swami Prakashananda visited India in 1923-24.

Swami Trigunatita firmly believed that America was destined to be a great spiritual land, second only to India and this suggestion for the perpetuation of the work was in thorough accord with his broad ideas for the spiritual development of America. Swami also firmly believed in the doctrine laid down by Swami Vivekananda and his great Master, that the mission of the East was to spiritualize the West—that spiritual light had always come from the East in the past and would continue to do so in the future. This belief influenced many of his plans for the work. He felt that if the two races, the Hindu and the American, could be brought together, it would result in a better understanding. To this end he advocated intermarriage between the better classes as a step upward, knowing that the civilization of the West could, on its side, offer much that India needed. This was one of the reasons the Temple was called the Hindu Temple.

Swami saw that the religion of the West was largely social in its character, that the desire for material gain and the appeal of sense enjoyments permeated to its very foundations. It was with this thought in mind, that he inaugurated the Hindu custom of the separation of the sexes in public worship—women on one side of the auditorium and men on the other. This innovation fell like a bombshell on those who were accustomed and attached to the Western practice of the sexes sitting

together, but, as in everything else, time proved the great adjuster and the innovation became an accepted custom.

Swami never despaired of fulfilment, for he left everything to the Mother's will. Full of inexhaustible patience he could wait forever. He said: "When you crave blessings, or whatever you ask from the Divine Mother, or whatever you need in life, be prepared and willing to wait, for years if necessary. Learn how to wait. Let Her will be done, even if you wait forever. Rest assured that Mother knows what is best for Her children." "Never expect anything, not even from me, and you will never be disappointed." He was full of helpfulness and encouragement to the sincere student who found meditation difficult. "Keep on having patience—never be impatient with the mind. When it wanders bring it back patiently, again and again if need be, but always patiently."

While his constant teaching to all was to begin where they were, he never lowered the ideal or minimized the effort necessary to reach the goal. To the saying, "Begin where you are" he added "That mind which is attached to more than one thing can never reach the goal." And "Learn to see God in everything about you. Smear God over everything and your mind will think of Him alone."

NON-SECTARIANISM

As a spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Trigunatita's utter catholicity of spirit would not tolerate the least suggestion of sectarianism. Like his great Master he believed that every path led to the Absolute, his only stipulation was sincerity. His generous heart could not brook the thought that any obstacle should be placed in the way of anyone seeking the truth, no matter what might be their intellectual capacity or their station in life.

To this end he preached no creed but proclaimed the truth alone, according to Vedanta, holding out hope to every sincere heart irrespective of its faith or creed. He quoted freely from the different scriptures of the world but never presented the claims of one Incarnation of God over another. In fact, speaking in a Christian country, the name of Jesus Christ was perhaps heard the most frequently but never in contradistinction to any other.

It was consequently a natural sequence that the name of Hindu Temple came to signify in the West the very essence of

religious liberty of thought and its audiences were gathered from many sects and creeds.

HIS MESSAGE

As a writer and speaker Swami went directly to the heart of his subject, and, though disregarding the studied art of literary expression, his style was vigorous and thoroughly personal.

He gave his first public lecture on February 1st, 1903, at Union Square Hall, San Francisco, beginning his discourse with the memorable words—"Children of the land of liberty. You are lovers of liberty, ardent lovers of true liberty ; but you must understand first what real liberty means. The exact, true liberty lies in the highest thoughts."

Again, in April, 1909, in the introduction to the first number of the "Voice of Freedom" magazine, he wrote: "Let the innermost chord of our heart be touched. Let it vibrate in such harmony that we all, in one voice, can sing that song—that universal song of Freedom. Let us talk through the Voice of Freedom ; let us think through the Light of Freedom ; let us act through the Might of Freedom."

He taught that Self-realization is the highest mission of life. "Within our Maya, within our own nature," he said, "is hidden the Divine Spirit. If we analyze and reason, if we think very regularly and deeply for a while, then we will notice something within us in the way of real truth, and, by and by, we will come to realize our proper state, our Godhood."

Swami always insisted on unremitting effort in the development of character and on the need of having a definite ideal and goal. In his own words: "The purpose of life, therefore, is to manifest ourselves, to express ourselves more and more. First, our life was something before consciousness ; then by effort we have grown so far as to be conscious ; and afterwards, we shall come to the superconscious state. And that is the purpose of our life—to progress from one state to another. In order to attain to that immortal life, we must be spiritual, we must be religious, and we must be thoughtful."

ILLNESSES

The second year after Swami's arrival in San Francisco his health suffered from an attack of rheumatism and other physical troubles. The different climate, the new confining life due to his intense devotion to the work, all told upon a constitution weakened by the merciless rigors of early asceticisms on the

path to realization. To one to whom the body had ceased to be the means to an end and was now only kept for the purpose of service to humanity, it was irksome to take proper precautions for its protection, and various ailments secured a foothold, resulting later in serious illnesses.

On a number of such occasions he was nursed back to health by Dhirananda (Mrs. C. F. Petersen). Her devotion was unbounded—no sacrifice could be too great for a son of Ramakrishna. Later because of her spiritual attainments and devotion to the cause she came to be Swami's leading disciple. Swami Turiyananda had given her the name of Dhira meaning "Steadiness" and later, in view of her faithfulness to the truth, Swami Trigunatita added Ananda, meaning "Bliss" making her name Dhirananda.

She received special instruction from Swami and this teaching and instruction is embodied in a series of lessons to follow the close of this narrative of Swami's life. She was a lineal descendant of the great Hungarian patriot Kossuth and possessed all the characteristics of her noble-hearted ancestor. Her natural love for freedom found its truest expression in her unswerving devotion to the truth as taught in Vedanta. Her nature was simple and open and she could not endure untruth of any kind.

She was a capable manager but, while thrifty by nature, she was yet generous to any worthy cause. Her husband, C. F. Petersen, was equally worthy of such a noble wife and was president of the Society under Swami for seven years. They had one son. While she was a devoted mother and loving wife, her love for the cause was still greater and grew with the years. Recognizing the Society as the channel through which the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna were to flow to the people of the West, she gave herself fully and labored unceasingly for its benefit until her sudden end by heart failure on Christmas morning, December 24, 1916, two years after Swami Trigunatita had passed away.

As the years drew on, Swami's ailments increased in number but he never allowed them to interfere with his work. For the last five years of his life he suffered constantly, day and night, from chronic rheumatism and Bright's disease. During cold weather he was compelled to wear two suits of heavy woolen underwear, wool stockings and, over all these, heavy woolen pants and sweater. He set himself on a strict diet, but his suffering was still constant. So complicated were his physical troubles that he used to say : ° "This body is kept together only

by the force of will, whenever I let go it will just fall to pieces of its own accord."

Notwithstanding this great handicap of ill-health he arose regularly at 4 A.M. daily and while meeting the demands of all his other duties he never failed to conduct the two Sunday lectures and classes for members. If anything, his activities increased. During all these physical troubles, Swami maintained his principle of sleeping on the floor of his office. The only concession he would make to the entreaties of disciples was to use a light mattress instead of a blanket and sufficient bedding to keep reasonably warm.

ISLAM IN INDIA

By PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

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The Muslim conquest of India differed fundamentally from all preceding invasions in one respect. The Muslims came to India as a new element which the older inhabitants could not absorb. The Greek, Scythian, Mongolian and Parthian invaders had, a few generations after their settlement in this land, been completely Hinduized in name, speech, manners, religion, dress and ideas.

In the second century before Christ, a Greek named Heliodorus, the son of Dion, when travelling in India on an embassy, could adore Vishnu and erect a column in honour of that Hindu god. Men considered it quite natural that he should do so and take to himself the title of a Bhagavat or Vaishnav. [Besnagar pillar inscription.]

But Islam is a fiercely monotheistic religion. It cannot allow any compromise with polytheism or admit a plurality of deities. The God of Islam and of Christianity—like the God of Judaism, which was the parent of both these creeds,—is "a living and a jealous God." He cannot tolerate any companion or sharer in the hearts of His adorers. Hence, the absorption of the Indo-Muslims into the fold of Hinduism by recognising Alla as another of the numberless incarnations of Vishnu and Muhammad as an inspired Sadhu, was impossible. Therefore, Hindus and Muhammadans,—as, later on, Hindus and Christians,—had to live in the same land without being able to mix together. Nothing has enabled them to bridge this gulf. The Indian Muslims have, throughout the succeeding centuries,

retained the extra-Indian direction of their hearts. Their faces are still turned, in daily prayer, to a spot in Mecca ; their minds, their law-code, their administrative system, their favourite reading sought models from outside India,—from Arabia and Syria, Persia and Egypt. All Muhammadans have the same sacred language, era, literature, teachers, saints and shrines, throughout the world, instead of these being restricted to India, as is the case with the Hindus.

The Hindus were willing to absorb the Muslims ; they wrote the *Allopanishad* and went perilously near to making an avatar of the Emperor Akbar. But the Muhammadans would not yield on the cardinal points of their faith, nor accept the few conventions necessary for entering Hindu society. They clung to the Quranic precepts : "The polytheists are unclean ; let nothing unclean enter the Kaba."

This was the cardinal difference between the Muslim settlement in India and all the other foreign immigrations that had gone before it. Another equally important characteristic of the Muslim element in India was that from 1200 to 1600 their State and society retained its original military and nomadic character,—the ruling race living merely like an armed camp in the land. It was Akbar who, at the end of the sixteenth century, began the policy of giving to the people of the country an interest in the State, and making the Government undertake some socialistic functions in addition to the mere police work it had hitherto contented itself with doing. Up to Akbar's time the Muslim settlers in India had been in the land but not of it.

MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA

What were the gifts of the Muslim age to India? They were ten :

(i) Restoration of touch with the outer world, which included the revival of an Indian navy and sea-borne trade, both of which had been lost since the decline of the Cholas.

(ii) Internal peace over a large part of India, especially north of the Vindhya.

(iii) Uniformity secured by the imposition of the same type of administration.

(iv) Uniformity of social manners and dress among the upper classes irrespective of creed.

(v) Indo-Saracen art, in which the mediaeval Hindu and Chinese schools were blended together. Also, a new style of architecture, and the promotion of industries of a refined kind (e.g., shawl, inlaying, kinkhab, muslim carpet, etc.).

(vi) A common *lingua franca*, called Hindustani or Rekhta, and an official prose style (mostly the creation of Hindu munshis writing Persian, and even borrowed by the Maratha *chitnises* for their own vernacular).

(vii) Rise of our vernacular literatures, as the fruits of peace and economic prosperity under the empire of Delhi.

(viii) Monotheistic religious revival and Sufism.

(ix) Historical literature.

(x) Improvements in the art of war and civilisation in general.

The intimate contact between India and the outer Asiatic world which had been established in the early Buddhistic age, was lost when the new Hindu society was reorganised and set in rigidity like a concrete structure about the eighth century A. D., with the result that India again became self-centred and isolated from the moving world beyond her natural barriers.

This touch with the rest of Asia and the nearest parts of Africa was restored by the Muslim conquest at the end of the 12th century, but with a difference. The Hindus no longer went outside, as they had done in the Buddhistic age ; only many thousands of foreigners poured into India and some Indian Muslims went abroad every year

"Through the passes of the Afghan frontier the stream of population and trade flowed peacefully into India from Bukhara and Samarkand, Balkh and Khurasan, Khwarizm and Persia, because Afghanistan belonged to the ruler of Delhi, till near the end of the Mughal empire (1739). Through the Bolan Pass, leading from India to Quandahar and Persia, as many as 14,000 camel-loads of merchandise passed every year in the reign of Jahangir, early in the 17th century. The ports on our western coast were so many doors between India and the outer world that could be reached by sea. From the eastern port of Masulipatam, belonging to the Sultans of Golkonda up to 1687 and thereafter to the Mughals,—ships used to sail for Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Siam and even China."*

"The two hundred years of Mughal rule gave to the whole of northern India and to much of the Deccan also, oneness of official language, administrative system and coinage, and also a popular *lingua franca* for all classes except the Hindu priests and the stationary village-folk. Even outside the territory directly administered by the Mughal emperors, their administra-

* Mughal Administration, 241.

tive system, official titles, court etiquette and monetary type were borrowed, more or less, by the neighbouring Hindu rajas.

"All the twenty Indian subahs of the Mughal empire were governed by means of exactly the same administrative machinery, with exactly the same procedure and official titles. Persian was the one language used in all official records, etc. . . . Officials and soldiers were frequently transferred from one province to another. Thus, the native of one province felt himself almost at home in another province ; traders and travellers passed most easily from city to city, *subah* to *subah*, and all realised the imperial oneness of this vast country."†

MUSLIM INFLUENCE ON FINE ARTS

In the domain of the fine arts, the richest contributions of the Mahomedans are a new style of architecture (especially palaces and tombs), the Indo-Saracen school of painting, and artificial gardening.

"In the earliest Muslim paintings to reach India, namely those from Khurasan and Bukhara, we see complete Chinese influence, especially in representing the faces, rocks, sheets of water, fire and dragons. . . . In the court of our truly national King Akbar, this Chinese or extra-Indian Muslim art mingled with pure Hindu art—whose traditions had been handed down unchanged since the days of the Ajanta frescoes and the Bharhut and Ellora reliefs. Thus Muslim art in India underwent its first transformation. The rigidity of the Chinese outline was softened. The conventionality of Chinese art was discarded. We note a new method of representing rocks, water and fire, which is no doubt suggestive of the Chinese school, but it is clearly the Chinese school in a process of dissolution and making a nearer approach to Nature. The scenery and features are distinctly Indian. . . . This process of the Indianisation of Saracen art continued after Akbar's time, till at last in the reign of Shah Jahan, the Chinese influence entirely disappeared, the Indian style became predominant, and the highest development was reached in delicacy of features and colouring, minuteness of detail, wealth and variety of ornamentation, and approximation to Nature—but without attaining either to true perspective or to light and shade. This Indo-Saracen art was entirely developed in the courts of the Mughal Emperors."—"Studies in Mughal India," 289, 291.

Thus, in painting there was a true revival and the highest genius was displayed by Indian artists in the Mughal age. This

† Mughal Administration, 238-239.

style lingers on in our times under the name of "Indian art" or "Mughal painting."

In European history we find that the social revolutions caused by the Barbarian overthrow of the Roman Empire continued through the Dark Ages till the 13th century, when the former provinces of the Roman Empire reappeared as independent national kingdoms, and in each of them a vernacular literature sprang up, which took the place of the old common cultural language Latin. Chaucer (c. 1360), Dante (c. 1300) and the Troubadours are the morning stars of song in the respective languages of England, Italy and France. In India, too, the old Sanskrit literature ceased to be a living growth after 1200 A.D. Though Sanskrit works continued to be written long after that date and have been written even in our own times, these were entirely artificial works,—mere commentaries, or commentaries on commentaries, conventional treatises or *tours de force*, and not original productions deserving the name of literature. They fail to appeal to our hearts or to add to our stock of knowledge, so that, it may be truly said that what is popularly called the Pathan period, i.e., from 1200 to 1550, was the Dark Age of North Indian history and the Hindu intellect was barren during these three centuries and a half. But, by the time that Akbar had conquered his enemies and established a broad empire covering all North India, peace and good administration began to produce their natural fruits. With the feeling of security, wealth grew, and wealth brought leisure and a passion for the things of the mind. There was a sudden growth of vernacular literature in all our provinces. In Bengal a new impulse was given to the creative instinct by the followers of Chaitanya (1485-1533), who wrote the first great works—as distinct from folk-songs—in modern Bengali. Such were the saint's biographies, the "Chaitanya Bhagavat" (1535) the "Chaitanya-charit-amrita" (completed 1582) and many others.

In the Hindi-speaking world the greatest master was Tulsidas, who began his immortal and perennially inspiring "Ramacharit-manasa" in 1574. He had been preceded by a Muslim poet, Malik Mahomed Jaisi, whose allegorical romance, the "Padmavat," had been completed in 1540 and "Murigavat" in 1502. There was quite a crop of Hindi poems produced in this age such as the *Akharavat*, *Sapanavat*, *Kandaravat*, *Madhu Malati*, *Usman's Chitravati* (1613).*

* I do not refer to eighteenth century or very late 17th century vernacular poetical romances like the Bengali works of Al Awal of Chittagong, or Nur Mahomed's Hindi poem "Indravati" (1742).

I do not here refer to the Hindi religious poems of an earlier age, like those of Kabir (d. 1518) Dadu and Nanak (1469-1538) because they were not literature proper, but more in the nature of aphorisms intended to be committed to the memory and transmitted orally.

Nor do I refer to the Persian literature (other than history) produced in India under the patronage of Akbar and his successors, because it was an exotic. Many of the Persian poets of the Delhi Court down to the middle of the 17th century were emigrants from Persia. Such were Mahomed Jan Qudsi, Taliba Amuli and others. Their productions have no life, no value as literature.

Urdu came into being in the 16th century, but only as a vulgar spoken tongue, despised by authors and cultured society. It became a literary language in the north only in the late 18th century, Wali of Aurangabad (c. 1710) having been its first recognised poet of note. But the southern Urdu or *Rekhta* had produced good poetry more than a century earlier.

The literary impulse given by the peace and prosperity of Akbar's long and successful reign and the patronage of that emperor and his vassal princes, led to a wonderful flowering of the Indian intellect at the close of the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries. To this period belongs the curious corrupt Sanskrit history of Bengal entitled "Shaikh-Subhodaya," the Persian writings of Chandra-bhan Brahman, a courtier and a diplomat of Shah Jahan, and the Hindi works noted in the "Mishra-Bandhu-Vinod," I.

INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON HINDUS

Let us now consider the result of the impact of Islam—both creed and society—on the Hindus and the reaction of Islam to its Hindu environment during the many centuries that these two faiths have lived together in the same land. Cunningham, the historian of the Sikhs, as early as the middle of the nineteenth century thus described the moral effect of the Muslim conquest :

"The influence of a new people, who equalled or surpassed Kshatriyas in valour, who despised the sanctity of Brahmans, and who authoritatively proclaimed the unity of God and His abhorrence of images—began gradually to operate on the minds of the multitude of India. . . . New superstition emulated old credulity. Pirs and shahids, saints and martyrs, equalled Krishna and Bhairav in the number of their miracles, and the

Mahomedans almost forgot the unity of God in the multitude of intercessors whose aid they implored.”*

That was one effect, the growth of popular superstition ; but something higher soon followed. I quote Cunningham again :

“The first result of the conflict [between Hinduism and Islam] was the institution, about the end of the 14th century, of a comprehensive sect by Ramanand of Benares. . . . He seized upon the idea of man’s equality before God. He instituted no nice distinctive observances, he admitted all classes of people as his disciples. About 1450, the mysterious (i.e., mystic) weaver Kabir assailed at once the worship of idols, the authority of the Quran and Shastras, and the exclusive use of a learned language.”

But it is historically incorrect to hold as Hunter and some other European writers have done, that the monotheistic and anti-caste movements among the Hindus in the Middle Ages originated in Islam. We know that all the higher thinkers, all the religious reformers, all the sincere devotees among the Hindus from the earliest times, have proclaimed one and only one supreme God behind the countless deities of popular worship, and have declared the equality of all true adorers and placed a simple sincere faith above elaborate religious ceremonies ; they have all tried to simplify religion and bring it to the doors of the commonest people. Hence, what really happened after the Muslim conquest was that these dissenting or reforming movements among the Hindus received a great impetus from the presence of the Mahomedans in their immediate neighbourhood. The example of Islamic society acted as a solvent on Hindu prejudice.

Many sects arose which tried to harmonise Islam and Hinduism and to afford a common meeting-ground to the devout men of both creeds, in which their differences of ritual, dogma and external marks of faith were ignored. This was the avowed aim of Kabir and Dadu, Nanak and Chaitanya. They made converts freely from Hindus and Muslims and rejected the rigid orthodoxy of the Brahman and the Mulla alike.

So, too the Sufi movement afforded a common platform to the more learned and devout minds among the Hindus and Mahomedans. Unlike the above-mentioned popular religions of mediæval India, Sufism never extended to the illiterate people. It was essentially a faith,—or rather an intellectual-emotional enjoyment—reserved for the philosophers, authors, and mystics

* History of the Sikhs, 2nd ed., 30-31.

free from bigotry. The eastern variety of Sufism is mainly an off-shoot of the Vedanta of the Hindus, and it rapidly spread and developed in India from the time of Akbar, under whose fostering care Hindu and Muslim thought formed a close union, with help from many Persian emigrants of liberal views. Akbar's mantle as an eclectic and peace-maker in religion fell on his great-grandson Dara Shukoh, who openly declared that he had found the fullest pantheism (*tauhid*) in the Vedanta only and prepared a Persian translation of fifty of the Upanishads and another work bearing the significant title of *Majmua-ul-baharain* or "The Mingling of the Two Oceans," which explains for Persian readers the technical terms of Hindu pantheism, with their parallels in Sufi phraseology, in order to facilitate the study of the subject by members of both creeds.

In short the popular religious sects founded by the saints and the Sufi philosophy tended to bring the ruling race and the subject people closer together.

HISTORICAL LITERATURE

Another gift of the Muslims to India is historical literature. The chronological sense was very imperfectly developed among the Hindus, who are apt to despise this world and its ephemeral occurrences. Before the Islamic conquest, they produced no true history at all.

On the other hand, the Arab intellect is dry, methodical and matter of fact. All their records contain a chronological framework. The historical literature of the Mahomedans in all countries has been vast and varied and well furnished with dates. We therein get a solid basis for historical study. The Persian chronicles which were written under every Muslim dynasty in India and in every reign under the Mughals not only serve as materials of study in themselves but furnished an example which Hindu writers and Hindu rulers were not slow to imitate. Thus a new, very useful element was introduced into Indian literature, and in the 17th and 18th centuries it formed a magnificent body—if we take all the histories, biographies and letters into account.

The cultural influence of the centuries of Muslim rule was necessarily wide-spread. Hunting, hawking and many games became Mahomedanised in method and terminology. In other departments also, Persian, Arabic and Turkish words have entered largely into the Hindi, Bengali, and even Marathi languages. The art of war was very highly developed by the Muslims, partly by borrowing from Europe through Turkey and

to a lesser extent through Persia. The imperial Mughal army served as a model which Hindu Rajahs eagerly imitated. The system of fortification was greatly improved by the Mahomedans in India, as a natural consequence of the general advance of civilisation and the introduction of artillery.

The Muslim influence was naturally most felt on the system of administration, the Court ceremonials and dress, the military organisations and arms, the lives of the upper classes, the articles of luxury, fine arts, architecture (other than religious) and gardening. In Court life and even the titles and office procedure of State officials, the Mughal Empire set the fashion which the Hindu Rajahs often slavishly copied. In some Rajput and Malwa Hindu States, the official language even to-day is Urdu and the Persian script is used instead of Deva Nagari.

The basis of the revenue system was indigenous and a continuation of the village organisation that had come down from before recorded history, but the official arrangements, titles and method of record-keeping were due to the Perso-Saracen model imported by the Muslim invaders, and these were borrowed by the Hindu States. [Mughal Administration, 2nd ed., ch. 5 and 11.]

In warfare, gunpowder was introduced and cavalry rose to great prominence eclipsing the elephants of the old Hindu days. The animals now ceased to be an arm and continued as a mere transport agency.

The Muslims, leading generally a more luxurious life than the Hindus and being a predominantly city population (except in East Bengal), encouraged several manufactures and fine arts. They were more tasteful and elegant than the Hindus in their daily life and even in their vices—which the richer Hindus and particularly the official class copied whenever they had the means. By the agency of the Mahomedans, new articles of food and new styles of cookery were introduced. In aesthetics, perfumery and—though not so completely, in music and dancing also, the Muslim royal family guided the taste of the entire society.

Paper was introduced by the Muhammadans, as the Arabic word "Kaghaz" proves. Thus, books could be multiplied in a more attractive and durable form than by scratching on palm leaves. The illumination of manuscripts is an art which we owe to the Mughal Empire, and from Akbar's time onwards Hindi and Sanskrit works were finely copied and illustrated for the sake of Hindu Rajahs, while the Persian book illumination

and caligraphy then done in India enjoyed deserved fame in Europe. . . .

The best medical men of the age were the *yunani hakims* or Muslim physicians practising the Graeco-Arab system of medicine. This was due partly on account of the patronage of the Court and of the nobility, but mainly because the progress of Hindu medicine had been arrested long ago, while Muslim medical science was daily progressing by keeping touch with the west.

The Muhammadans were the only foreign traders of India (if we leave out the European sojourners in the land). This naturally resulted in a greater expansion of their minds in comparison with those of the stay-at-home Hindus. In the Persian language, a travelled man, *mard-i-jiham-dida*, rightly considered as a model of wisdom and culture.*

INDIA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

[The following is the report of a lecture delivered by the Swami at Detroit on Thursday, February 15, 1894, with the editorial comments of *The Detroit Free Press*.—Ed.]

An audience that filled the Unitarian Church heard the renowned Monk, Swami Vivekananda, deliver a lecture last night on the manners and customs of his country. His eloquent and graceful manner pleased his listeners, who followed him from beginning to end with the closest attention, showing approval from time to time by outbursts of applause. While his lecture was more popular in character than the celebrated Address before the religious congress in Chicago, it was highly entertaining, especially where the speaker diverted from the instructive portions and was led to an eloquent narration of certain spiritual conditions of his own people. It is upon matters religious and philosophic (and necessarily spiritual) that the eastern brother is most impressive, and, while outlining the duties that follow the conscientious consideration of the great moral law of nature, his softly modulated tones, a peculiarity of his people, and his thrilling manner are almost prophetic. He speaks with marked deliberation, except when placing before his listeners some moral truth, and then his eloquence is of the highest kind.

* The fourth in a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

It seemed somewhat singular that the eastern monk who is so out-spoken in his disapproval of missionary labour on the part of the Christian church in India, (where, he affirms, the morality is the highest in the world) should have been introduced by Bishop Ninde, who in June will depart for China in the interest of foreign Christian missions. The Bishop expects to remain away until December, but if he should stay longer he will go to India. The Bishop referred to the wonders of India, and the intelligence of the educated classes there, introducing Vivekananda in a happy manner. When that dusky gentleman arose, dressed in his turban and bright gown, with handsome face and bright, intelligent eyes, he presented an impressive figure. He returned thanks to the Bishop for his words and proceeded to explain race divisions in his own country, the manners of the people and the different languages. Principally there are four northern tongues and four southern, but there is one common religion. Four-fifths of the population of 300,000,000 people are Hindoos and the Hindoo is a peculiar person. He does everything in a religious manner. He eats religiously ; he sleeps religiously ; he rises in the morning religiously; he does good things religiously and he also does bad things religiously. At this point the lecturer struck the great moral keynote of his discourse, stating that with his people it was the belief that all non-self is good and all self is bad. This point was emphasized throughout the evening and might be termed the text of the address. To build a home is selfish, argues the Hindoo ; so he builds it for the worship of God and for the entertainment of guests. To cook food is selfish, so he cooks it for the poor ; he will serve himself last if any hungry stranger applies, and this feeling extends throughout the length and breadth of the land. Any man can ask for food and shelter and any house will be opened to him.

The caste system has nothing to do with religion. A man's occupation is hereditary, a carpenter is born a carpenter ; a goldsmith, a goldsmith ; a workman, a workman ; and a priest, a priest ; but this is a comparatively modern social evil, since it has existed only about 1,000 years. This period of time does not seem so great in India as in this and other countries. Two gifts are especially appreciated—the gift of learning and the gift of life. But the gift of learning takes precedence. One may save a man's life ; and that is excellent ; one may impart to another knowledge, and that is better. To instruct for money is an evil, and to do this would bring opprobrium on the head of the man who barter learning for gold, as though it were

an article of trade. The Government makes gifts from time to time to the instructors, and the moral effect is better than it would be if the conditions were the same as exist in certain alleged civilized countries. The speaker had asked through the length and breadth of the land what was the definition of civilization, and he had asked the question in many countries. Sometimes the reply had been given: "What we are, that is civilization." He begged to differ in the definition of the word. A nation may control the elements, develop the utilitarian problems of life seemingly to the limit and yet not realize that in the individual the highest type of civilization is found, in him who has learned to conquer self. This condition is found in India more than in any country on earth, for there the material conditions are subservient to the spiritual, and the individual looks for the soul manifestations in everything that has life, studying nature to this end. Hence that gentle disposition to endure with indomitable patience the flings of what appears unkind fortune, the while there is a full consciousness of a spiritual strength and knowledge greater than possessed by any other people; hence the existence of a country and a people from which flows an unending stream that attracts the attention of thinkers far and near to approach and throw from their shoulders an oppressive earthly burden. The early kings, who in 260 B. C., commanded that there should be no more bloodshed, no more wars, and who sent forth instead of soldiers an army of instructors, acted wisely, although in material things the land has suffered. But though in bondage to brutal nations who conquer by force, the Indian spiritually endures forever, and nothing can take it away from him. There is something Christlike in the humility of the people to endure the stings and arrows of outraged fortune, the while the soul is advancing towards the brighter goal. Such a country has no need of Christian missionaries to "preach ideas," for theirs is a religion that makes men gentle, sweet, considerate and affectionate towards all God's creatures, whether man or beast. Morally, said the speaker, India is head and shoulders above the United States or any other country on the globe. Missionaries would do well to come there and drink of the pure waters, and see what a beautiful influence upon a great community have the lives of the multitude of holy men.

Then marriage condition was described; and the privileges extended to women in ancient times, when the system of co-education flourished. In the records of the saints in India there is the unique figure of the prophetess. In the Christian creed

they are all prophets, while in India the holy women occupy a conspicuous place in the holy books. The householder has five objects for worship. One of them is learning and teaching. Another is worship of dumb creatures. It is hard for Americans to understand the last worship and it is difficult for Europeans to appreciate the sentiment. Other nations kill animals by wholesale and kill one another ; they exist in a sea of blood. A European said that the reason in India animals were not killed was because it was supposed that they contained the spirits of ancestors. This reason was worthy of a savage nation, who are not many steps from the brute, the fact being that the transmigration of souls theory was evolved by a set of atheists in India and was never a religious doctrine, it was an idea of a materialistic creed. The worship of dumb animals was pictured in a vivid manner. The hospitable spirit—the Indian golden rule was illustrated by a story. A Brahmin, his wife, his son and his son's wife had not tasted food for some time on account of a famine. The head of the house went out and after a search found a small quantity of barley. He brought this home and divided it into four portions, and the small family was about to eat, when a knock was heard at the door. It was a guest. The different portions were set before him and he departed with his hunger satisfied, while the quartette who had entertained him perished. This story is told in India to illustrate what is expected in the sacred name of hospitality.

The speaker concluded in an eloquent manner. Throughout his speech was simple, but whenever he indulged in imagery, it was delightfully poetic, showing that the eastern brother has been a close and attentive observer of the beauties of nature. His excessive spirituality is a quality which makes itself felt with his auditors, for it manifests itself in the love for animate and inanimate things, and in the keen insight into the mysterious workings of the divine law of harmony and kindly intentions.

Tonight, Vivekananda will speak at the Unitarian Church on "Hindoo Philosophy." In this lecture his scholarly attainments will undoubtedly find even broader scope and the opportunity will be given for a more liberal presentation of his religious views.

DUTY TO MOTHERLAND

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

The motherland is nothing in the world but a vast university, and every child born within her sphere is one of its students. The ideas and ideals that constitute India have never suffered any rude wholesale interruption. They have grown steadily, always ready to adopt a new light on the old truth, the most extraordinary example in the world of absorption mingled with conservation, acceptance and resistance in one breath.

India is a vast university, and every child born within her owes to her the service of a student. Every life, however simple, helps to build up the inheritance for the future. Infinite as is our debt to the famous names of the past, it is still greater to the shadowy crowds of the Unknown Dead, with whom we ourselves may look to be one day joined. We must remember that in all universities, not only in the Indian university, behind all intellectual cultures, not only behind that of the *dharma*, the driving force is *character*, and the mind of humanity—which for each man is the heart of his own people—is the treasure-house, in which the fruit of our lives should rest.

It is our duty to the nation to make the most of our opportunities of learning. In order to make the most of them we must first cultivate fine character. Fine character is always known by the nobility of its tastes. Its leisure is always well spent, on ends both lofty and refined. Tell me your hobbies, and I will tell you what sort of citizens you will make. Why must a man be poor in order to be admirable? The modern type of university specially sets itself to create activities to which even rich men must devote all their resources if they are to succeed. Great libraries, archæological collections, fine instruments, the culture of to-day offers careers of a thousand kinds in all these directions. But in all these things a man must toil for himself. He cannot employ a servant to do his learning for him. Scholarship was never done by proxy.

The man who has fine tastes can never be vulgar. He is true to his own refinement in every moment of his life. The respect which he has for himself he accords to other people. He seeks noble company, and his manners tell of his own freedom of heart and his reverence for the freedom of others.

We should carry with us into all companies the memory of having been with noble persons. Without this, we are not fit for great associations, for we are ourselves without dignity. And without a constant upspringing of love and reverence to those who are about us, we cannot realise this memory. Only by respect for ourselves, respect for women as women, and respect for old age, can we build up true dignity. Accustomed to our language with its fine gradations of terms, those who speak English are apt to imagine that there are in modern languages no means of expressing delicate degrees of honour. But let the *feeling* of honour be in the mind, and you will find that any language will express it for you. The word *you* becomes fifty different words for the man who is really conscious of what is due to others. Yet in fine manners there is no slavishness. There must be grandeur and freedom of bearing. The man's homage must be to the *ideal* that he recognises, not merely to the *person* who for the moment embodies it. There must be no laziness. The quiet of outward conduct must be expressive of intense activity of mind and heart. Laziness, like cowardice, is an affront to those who call us theirs. For their sake, if not for our own, we must bear ourselves as those entrusted with great parts. But our activity must not be fussiness. Are these distinctions not of the very essence of fine manners?

Above all, our great duty as Hindus is to hold the world always as a net-work of ideals. Behind the new fact we must strive to find the ideal that it illustrates. In our reverence for those about us we must pay our homage to the ideals of our own past. We must remember that the problems of to-day are all the problems of the ideal world. If we can step from ideal to ideal, from the realisation of the known to the struggle for the unknown, then we shall do our whole duty.

INDIAN MORALITY

By C. F. ANDREWS

[We extract the following from the writer's reply to Miss Mayo's *Mother India*, now being serially published in Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India*. This witness of one who was foreign-born and a Christian missionary, but has gained a true insight into Indian realities and ideals, should be acceptable as valuable to all fair-minded persons. Mr. Andrews himself observes: "In reply to all such sweeping statements about sexual evils in India, my personal testimony is this. Compared with

other countries, the youth of India is singularly clean and temperate. This testimony, which I give after careful deliberation and exact choice of each word I have put down, must necessarily carry weight, because both in my constant daily work of College education, and also among villagers and industrial labourers as a social worker, I have had abundant opportunities of knowing the main facts at first hand. Later on, I shall quite openly and frankly tell all that is to be told about the adverse conditions of other sides of life in modern India, where things have gone grievously wrong. Some of these are doing great injury to the country. But as a truthful man, who have sought all my life to put Truth above everything else, I unhesitatingly affirm that compared with other countries, the youth of India is clean and in sex matters singularly restrained."—*Ed.*]

A constructive picture is needed in order to show what Indian domestic life really is. . . . People in the West desire to know what actual life in the East is.

The vast bulk of the people of India, numbering ninety per cent of the whole, live in villages and small hamlets, not in great cities. Large towns are singularly rare, and most of them are of modern growth. These villagers, for the most part, are remote from town life. Where no railway is near at hand, this remoteness at times amounts to isolation.

This village society makes up, on every side, the one all-pervading background of India, ancient and modern. To a peculiar degree, it represents "Mother India," not the large towns like Calcutta and Bombay. It has a character and vitality of its own, which needs to be studied with very sensitive and delicate care, if its inner secret is to be discovered. . . .

. . . . since India is essentially a land of villages, it follows that the moral conditions of India are in the long run practically equivalent to the moral conditions which prevail in the country rather than in the towns. If the village life is rotten, then India must be rotten. But if this village life is still healthy, then the moral life of India must be healthy. My own conviction is, that though there may be many evils to be overcome, and bad customs to be abolished, especially in dealing with the modern towns and the industrial centres, village life of India, as a whole, is a clean life and normally free from the grosser forms of sexual passion.

Where there are, in all, more than seven hundred thousand villages, each with a character of its own, only a lifelong residence in India, on the part of a foreigner, can give him experience sufficient to say with confidence that the main facts are known to him at last. Indian life is so complex, that most of

those who stay longest in the country grow less confident, as time goes on, about the things they believed to be true.

Certain characteristics, however, stand out with some distinction. In no country in the world, for instance, are acts of criminal violence less frequent than in India ; yet passion is widely recognised as a potent cause of violent deeds. . . . Crime itself is singularly rare. Drunkenness hardly exists, except in the toddy-drinking areas of the South. Opium,—the curse of China—is hardly a vice in India outside a few black spots, chiefly in the towns. Animal life is not sacrificed for food over the greater part of the country. A variety of coarse kinds of grain, chiefly rice, forms the staple diet. The poverty is extreme. Only the barest necessities are purchased with money. The whole life is incredibly simple. This is all very far removed from indulgence in vicious practices.

The industry of these patient villagers is proverbial. They have a religious culture of their own, which reaches mystical heights of spiritual vision. There is often also a profundity of thought expressed in simplest language. The poets of India usually come from these village homes.

Great saints, with strikingly impressive personality, both men and women, live in them ascetic lives. Their memory abides. The genius of India, i.e. Art, Music, Literature, Architecture has continually had its origin in these villages. Even among the poorest and the most depressed classes, great men have been born, who have won the allegiance of posterity by their wisdom, piety and devotion. Such men and women are still to be found to-day. In every part of India I have met them, and have felt the truth of the words of Christ : "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the worldly-wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

For though these simple villagers may be babes in worldly wisdom, they are by no means lacking in shrewd mother-wit. As a whole, they are exceptionally intelligent in their own way ; and from their rugged stock, all that is best in India has proceeded from one generation to another, to the great enrichment of mankind. Their life is spent almost entirely in the air, exposed to heat and cold, sun and rain with only the barest covering of the body. A strict ethical code of domestic relationships has been worked out in a manner consonant with the village life itself. The community is like a larger family. Behind all

there is a religious observance which has placed the greatest emphasis on self-control.

Hindu religious custom is a conservative force, of immense potency, acting on the inner life and going back countless centuries in its origin and conception. It has become a part of the whole system, exacting a restraint scrupulously observed. Owing to its inhibitions with regard to eating, drinking and marriage relations, the villagers are ordered and the sex life has been disciplined. While in some way, such as by early marriages, sex has been given scope, in other ways it has been remarkably subdued.

After making wide generalisations like these, the real difficulty begins. For the differences in Indian village life, as I have witnessed it, are almost as marked as the underlying similarity of its texture.

In some parts, like Orissa, the whole countryside is stricken by constant malaria, flood and famine leaving a population sunk in want. On the other hand, in the Punjab and Gujarat, there is a peasantry, strong, virile, independent, retaining a simple hardihood of living untouched as yet by luxury or slothful ease. In the South of India, in spite of tropical climate and meagre diet, there is an almost inexhaustible store of spiritual energy, often alas, running to waste. In Bengal, the artistic and literary genius, still to be found in the villages, is a marked feature. This has resulted in a wide literary renaissance in modern times. Sindh is a desert land, where mystical religious poetry has flourished age after age, uniting Hindu and Mussalman saints in a common devotion. Everywhere, in the villages, the love of music, the delight in song, and the recital of epics, amounts almost to a passion.

There is one phrase in English literature, which describes a major part of this village life,—Wordsworth's "plain living and high thinking." It may be that the type of thought is very often unscientific. Illiteracy abounds. Nevertheless, my own experience has been, that in every part of India the deeper things of the spirit of man,—the problems of existence,—the final mystery of God,—the inner discipline of the soul,—have a larger place in the thoughts of living men and women to-day than anywhere else in the world. There is also a greater readiness to abandon everything that man holds dear in search of the inner truth, when the voice within the soul commands.

Such things as these, that I have tried to describe, imply a deep restraining influence both of will and custom. The "plain living" that goes with this "high thinking" is so severe,

that very few Europeans have been able to adapt themselves to its extreme simplicity. I have often been put to shame, owing to the small requirements which I have still found necessary, and also on account of the trouble I have given to the villagers merely to satisfy a few small personal needs.

Beyond what I have described, it is necessary always to remember that there are millions of villagers—called the depressed classes, or “untouchables”—who are living on an even lower scale of hard physical discomfort. Indeed, if it were not for the abundant sunshine of India, giving warmth and nourishment from the air directly through the skin, unimpeded except by a loin-cloth round the waist, it is almost doubtful whether it would be possible for a large portion of these depressed and indebted classes, who subsist on the lowest diet, to continue to live at all. Those who know India best will agree that on the physical side, my description has been no exaggeration of the stark naked facts. They will also agree that on the mental and spiritual side, I have by no means overdrawn the picture. Yet facts like these seem to be convincingly to prove that the “sex” theory of Indian poverty is wrong.

The effect in Indian villages of this hard discipline may be observed in the faces of the men and women. There is pain and endurance written across them, in large characters; but they are very rarely sensual.

I have wandered about all over India, very often entirely alone, from village to village, sharing the life of the people as few Englishmen have done, and welcomed everywhere by the villagers as their friend. One thing more than any other has impressed me, wherever I have gone, namely the temperate habits of the people.

This habitual self-restraint may still further be observed from its slight reactions. For it seems to give way suddenly each year, for a day or two, as for instance at the time of the Holi Festival in spring, when license often breaks through restraint. But it is noticeable, that immediately afterwards, the even tenor of daily life begins over again. The one individual extravagance is a marriage festival. Then restraint in expenditure gives way; and this event in a family will lead to years of after-indebtedness. Yet psychologically, with such a constant repression, this sudden outburst finds in a measure its own justification.

After the outline I have given, it will easily be seen, how untrue to facts Miss Mayo's general picture of gross sexual

extravagance in Indian life must be. The assertion, for instance, that seven or eight out of every ten young men between the ages of twenty-five and thirty become impotent owing to sexual excess, is so palpably absurd, when one reviews this village population, that it hardly needs contradiction.

It is true, that her declaration is modified by the words "provided he has means to command his pleasure." But that proviso, in my opinion, only makes the slander worse. For I have lived in houses in all parts of India, where ample means have existed for leading a sensual life of pleasure ; but instead of this, the vigour of self-restraint was so all-pervading as to be a perpetual wonder to me. A reference is made in her book to the more healthy life of the country as obviating a part of the sexual excess imagined everywhere to prevail. But as I have tried to show, this healthy life of the country must to a supreme degree represent the true normal state of India ; for it comprises ninety per cent of the population.

The town life, which has been hurriedly and precipitately pushed forward in Bombay and Calcutta, and in a few other places, is in no sense the typical life of India, in the same way that industrialised England represents the English people. The proportions are all reversed. In England, the urban population far exceeds the rural ; but in India, the village people everywhere predominate. The towns are a growth of modern times, artificial and exotic. The villages have nestled amid their trees for centuries.

The bulk of Hindu India, representing the great majority of the Indian people (for three out of four are Hindus), maintains up to the present time, in these numberless villages, its own ultra-conservative customs. These are in need of reconstruction in certain important respects, which will be dealt with later. Let me only mention here, that the greatest of all economic requirements is the revival of those village industries of spinning and weaving, which were almost entirely destroyed owing to the influx of foreign machine-made materials from the West.

The point, which I desire to stress still further, is this. The whole of this vast, intricate and closely-woven domestic system, stretching from one end of India to the other, is remarkably free from those evil obsessions about which such unprintable things have been written in this book. It is a hard thing to say, but it is true, that much that is stated both about immoral religious symbols in the temples and immoral perversions in the home, must have had its origin in the minds of these who have wished to believe such things to be true and

have told them to Miss Mayo. To take one instance, I doubt if a single Hindu, who was not an antiquarian, would ever have heard the theory, here put forward positively as the truth, that the religious Vaishnava mark on the forehead is obscene. Certainly I never heard it before. Gandhiji has written to the same effect. Whatever may have been the original meaning, they certainly do not actively excite evil passions in the Hindu villagers to-day. I have watched Hindu women, whose faces were like that of the Madonna, making their offerings at the way-side shrines, or near the bathing ghats. It would be impossible to associate obscenity with such faces as these.

It is true, on the other hand, that there was an age of coarseness in the past, coinciding with the massive temple-building. Few countries, with a long historic background have been able to escape this ; for the pendulum of human nature swings from one side always to the other. We find the same thing in Greece and Rome. In India, the devadasis, or temple prostitutes, are a relic of that evil past ; and their retention to-day, in connection with some notorious temples, shows that the same passions still exist and are still shamefully encouraged.

These devadasis have come to me as their brother and friend to help them. They have implored me to deliver their little daughters from their own inexpressibly miserable fate. I have sat with them, hour after hour, while they have mentioned, with bowed heads, their wretchedness. All this I have told openly in the public press, making no reservation ; and my words, written from a tortured heart, have never received a single word of condemnation from any Hindu, but only strong approval. As a Christian, I have been again and again asked to preside when this subject was being discussed in open conference ; and my earnest fellowship has been sought in helping to bring this evil to an end. . . .

Personally I have confidence that this admittedly evil custom of by-gone days, along with many others, has now nearly worked itself out. There is not any longer the social will behind it to keep it alive. If certain economic factors could be surmounted, it would die a natural death.

Let me return from these acknowledgments concerning things that have troubled and disturbed me, to the bed-rock facts about Indian village life which are unshaken and unshakable. The facts are these, that whatever accretions and excrescences have intervened to sap its vitality, whatever evil customs and traditions have spread like creepers over it, the tree

of Indian life is sound at the root. It is not rotten and decayed. By nature and instinct I am very sensitive in these matters ; and the repulsion would be immediate, if there were a sensual background, festering within those villages, where I have lived and moved.

But it is literally true about my personal experience that any such sensitive repulsion in the presence of what is base has very rarely indeed happened to me, while living this simple village life in India among the village people. There has been extraordinarily little, either in thought or word, or open deed, that could be called gross or indecent. This has appeared to me to be due not to the repression of "sex," but rather to its general lack of prominence as an all-engrossing theme. There have been exceptional occasions when I have been repulsed. But these have been so rare as not to count as normal.

Of one thing I would bear special witness ; and the emphasis that I would lay upon it is paramount in this connection. The natural modesty, simplicity and purity of the Indian women have impressed me more and more deeply every year that I have lived in India. It is the one thing that I come back to after journeys abroad, with renewed happiness, as one of the most beautiful things in human life. It needs to be stated, that as a man of religion, trusted and respected, I have met those who are usually confined to parda, as well as those who are not bound by strict seclusion. This parda distinction refers rather to the towns than the villages ; for in the villages the life is usually open ; but I have mentioned it in order to avoid any possible doubt as to the scope of my experience.

The ordinary word, by which every Indian woman is addressed is either 'sister' or 'mother', according to the age of the person. The habit of using these words is not confined to those who are near relations in one family, or even to close neighbours. They are applied to people who are met as visitors or strangers. Servants use them towards those who are set over them in the household. They are not empty or formal symbols but contain a world of meaning. The gentle quality of Indian womanhood corresponds to them. For it is the sisterly and motherly element that always predominates in domestic duties and in friendly greetings.

Instead, therefore, of the sex passion being "the one subject of conversation," and instead of songs dealing with it being eternally on the lips of Indian women, as this book sug-

gests, the motherly and sisterly relations are those that come to the front.

No student would ever speak to me of his own mother or his own sister with such pure reverence and devotion, if his own nearest relations in his own household had ruined his young life by filthy vices.

Thus the domestic picture, which is offered in Miss Mayo's book to Western readers as undoubted truth, is to me who have shared Indian home life more intimately perhaps than any other European, fundamentally untrue and distorted. It is so wrong, that it is difficult to understand from what quarter this legend has been picked up. If such ideas as these are actually being circulated in the clubs and hotels, where Europeans meet and talk, it bodes ill for the future intercourse between the two peoples.

REVIEW

MY SOJOURN IN ENGLAND by Major B. D. Basu, I.M.S. (Retd.). Published by R. Chatterjee, 91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. 184 pp. Price Rs. 2/-.

The book is a record of the author's impressions of England when he resided there as a student in the late eighties of the last century. He dwells on such topics as English marriage system, the fair sex of England, English morality, religion of England, etc. The book is interesting reading, though naturally many of the author's observations will not apply to the present conditions of England.

GLIMPSES by T. L. Vaswani. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 86 pp. Price As. 12.

The booklet is a collection of notes arranged under such headings as Shanti or Peace-Chant, the Flute, Spheres of Silence, Atmadarshan, The Note Universal, The Law of Humility, The Hindu Vision, etc. The notes are pregnant with meaning and thought-provoking.

A SYNTHESIS OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA by the Editors of the "Shrine of Wisdom". Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Lincoln House, Acacia Road, Acton, London, W. 3. 71 pp. Price 3/- net.

The authors of this synthesis believe that the Gita teaches five ways to the realisation of God,—Dharma Marga, (The Path of Duty), Karma Marga (The Path of Action), Bhakti Marga (The Path of Devotion), Jnana Marga (The Path of Knowledge), and Raja Marga (The Path of Perfective Union). They have therefore arranged the greater part of the text of the Gita according to this fivefold classification and translated it for the benefit of English readers, with suitable notes wherever necessary. The attempt is certainly laudable. But we do

not think the Gita makes any distinction between Karma Marga and Dharma Marga. Nor is it correct to say, "the three faculties of will, heart, and mind are then brought into play, and as their exercise becomes more and more perfect by progress in Karma, Bhakti, and Jñāna Mārga all activities gradually become blended in Rāja Mārga." The authors would have done better to have conceived the meaning of the Gita from the orthodox Hindu standpoint.

DEUS HOMO by George Chainey. Published by the Christopher Publishing House, Boston, U. S. A. 317 pp. 28 illustrations. Price \$2.50 net.

The sub-title of the book is "The perfect life of man in God and of God in man." "The purpose of these studies is to teach the nature of Divine and human perfection and the sweet sublime simplicity of their mutual correlations." The author has his individual views on how to attain the mutual relations of God and man and he interprets the stories of the New Testament in the terms of spiritual development. In spite of the author's bold claim of fellowship with The Living God, we regret we cannot thoroughly appreciate his often mystifying teachings. The highest truths are always the simplest.

THE MISREAD RECORD OR THE DELUGE AND ITS CAUSE by Isaac Newton Vail. Published by the Simplex Publishing Co., Box 595, Seattle, Wash., U. S. A. Pp. 88. Price 75c.

The writer maintains that "a vast cloud-canopy of primitive earth-vapors, such as now envelop the planets Jupiter and Saturn, lingered as a revolving deluge-source, in the skies of antediluvian man,—a source of primeval rains, snows and hail, competent to produce all the floods, and all the Glacial Epochs the earth ever saw, and that this last fall of those primordial waters deepened the oceans many fathoms." This is the author's explanation of the Deluge. Japanese, Vedic, Greek, Roman, Scandinavian, Biblical, all mythologies and lores have been made to yield circumstantial evidence in support of this unique theory.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Ashrama, Ranchi, B. & O.

The Ashrama is situated at the foot of the Morabadi Hill in a small Bungalow in the midst of the beautiful scenery of the suburbs of Ranchi.

The task of establishing this centre was entrusted to Swami Visuddhananda who took up his residence here in November 1927 last. Besides the distribution of Homeopathic medicine to the poor villagers, he at once began holding regular Gita classes in the Doranda Puja Mandap. These classes have done immense good to the public and are gradually growing in interest and attendance. The Swami had also to deliver several lectures in the Brahmacharya Vidyalaya, Town

Club and Hindoo Durga Mandir, his subjects being "Education", "The Gita" and "The Upanishads" respectively. The anniversary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda in the Hindoo Friends' Union Club, of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Chaitanya in the Doranda Puja Mandap and of Lord Buddha in the Ranchi Brahmacharya Vidyalaya were also attended by the Swami, on invitation either as president or speaker.

A fresh period of activity will soon demand his exertions when he will begin another regular Scripture-class in the Ranchi Durga Mandir, as the educated public of the town have already invited him to do.

R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta

The R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta, has been steadily growing since its inception in 1919. The report of the year 1927 records 23 students on the roll of which 17 were maintained free and 4 were concession-holders and 2 paying. The Home is run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, co-ordinating the ancient ideals of education with the modern, under the care and guidance of Hindu Sannyasins. The Home requires considerable expansion of its scope. It should accommodate at least 100 students who may get there, in addition to their University education, a training in Agriculture, Dairy-farming and some other useful home-industries. For this, at least 25 *bighas* of land are required in the neighbourhood of Calcutta.

The purchase of the land alone will require at least Rs. 20,000. The Home earnestly appeals for funds. Contributions may be sent to the *Secretary, R. K. Mission Students' Home, 7, Halder Lane, Calcutta.*

Bankura Famine Relief—An Appeal

During the first three weeks of July, our workers in the famine-stricken area of Bankura have distributed 183 mds. 30 seers of rice among 1176 recipients covering an area of 107 villages. The condition of people does not show any sign of improvement. The middle class gentry are now constrained to avail themselves of our relief measures. The condition of the poor classes is comparatively better as they are now getting manual work in the field. But their misery will appear over again as soon as the sowing season is over. Any how our relief work must go on for some months more till the next harvest places the country on a better economic footing.

The gravity of the situation demands a continued support from the generous public in a larger measure. Our appeal goes to all, poor and rich alike to help us in alleviating the distress of our countrymen. All help in cash or kind (specially cloth) may be kindly sent to any of the following addresses which will be duly acknowledged by the Treasurer of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math (Howrah); Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar or Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य ब्रह्मनिबोधत ।
Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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No. 9.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

(To an American Friend)

Detroit,
15th March, 1894.

I am wearied of lecturing and all that nonsense. This mixing with hundreds of varieties of the human animal has disturbed me. I will tell you what is to my taste: I cannot write and I cannot speak, but I can think deep, and when I am heated, can speak fire. It should be however to a select, a very select, few. Let them, if they will, carry and scatter my ideas broadcast—not I. This is only a just division of labour. The same man never succeeded both in thinking and in scattering his thoughts. Thoughts so given are not worth anything. A man should be free to think, especially spiritual thoughts.

Just because this assertion of independence, this proving that man is *not a machine*, is the essence of all religious thought, for that very reason it is impossible to think it in the routine mechanical way. It is this tendency to bring everything

down to the level of a machine that has given the West its wonderful prosperity. And it is this which has driven away all religion from its doors. Even the little that is left it, the West has reduced to a systematic drill.

I am really not 'cyclonic' at all. Far from it. The thing that I want is not here, nor can I longer bear this 'cyclonic' atmosphere. This is the way to perfection, to strive to be perfect, and to strive to make perfect a few men and women. My idea of doing good is only this—to evolve a few giants, and not to strew pearls before swine, and so lose time, health and energy.

How I should like to become dumb for some years, and not talk at all! I was not made for these worldly fights and struggles. I am naturally dreamy and slothful. I am born idealist, and can only live in a world of dreams. The touch of material things disturbs my visions and makes me unhappy. But Thy will be done!

LOOKING BEYOND THE FRONTIER

BY THE EDITOR

During the last few months, the question of immortality has profoundly stirred many of the thinking minds of England. The immediate occasion has been a pronouncement of Sir Arthur Keith, President of the British Association. In a lecture delivered at Manchester University, Sir Arthur maintained that medical science could find no ground for believing that the brain is a dual organ,—a compound of substance and of spirit. He held that "every fact known to the medical men compels the inference that mind, spirit, soul are manifestations of a living brain just as flame is the manifest spirit of a burning candle. At the moment of extinction both flame and spirit cease to have a separate existence. However much this mode of explaining man's mentality may run counter to long and deeply cherished beliefs, medical men cannot think otherwise if they are to believe the evidence of their senses."

This categorical denial of the survival of bodily death naturally evoked a storm of controversy. Some expressed the view that the brain was only the instrument of the soul and therefore when the instrument was destroyed it was not necessary that the soul would also be destroyed. Some took an

agnostic attitude, without pronouncing either way. Some said that "just as every scrap of material energy, is never lost, but returns to the ever-constant store of energy which is the source of all physical activity in the universe, so spiritual or mental activity is not lost, but all of it returns, in some way not yet understood, to a store or pool of spiritual reality which is the non-material counterpart of energy."

Science has often fought valiantly against the cherished beliefs of mankind, but never perhaps so clumsily as against the belief in immortality. Let us see what arguments biology and materialism can produce against immortality. In this we will be much helped by Sir Arthur himself who has since put forward his case in a succinct form.

He says that he also believes in immortality. But that is only euphemism. His idea is that the whole of life from protoplasmic beginning upto man, from the very ancient past upto the present and on to endless future till the earth is extinct and unfit for life, is a continuous web. Individuals die, but the species live. "It is in this material sense that the biologist regards man as an immortal being ; we survive, if we survive at all, only in the lives of our descendants. Every man and woman is born with the seeds of immortality within their bodies."

What is death, according to the biologist? One argument advanced by them against the survival of bodily death, is that death is not an affair of an instant. If death is due to the escape of an immaterial spirit, we should expect it to be instantaneous, whereas it is found to be a process of piecemeal. When a doctor finds that his patient's heart has ceased to beat and his breath has ceased to ebb and flow, he concludes that death has taken place. But strictly speaking, this will not be considered death by the biologists. "Could the physician instantly set up an apparatus by which he could circulate fresh blood, containing oxygen, through the vessels of the dead man's head, consciousness would return ; memory and thought would revive ; mind would be restored, words uttered, as long as the artificial circulation was continued. But let the circulation and the supply of oxygen cease for ten minutes and the living units of the brain, in their serried millions, pass into a state of irretrievable death."

"The heart itself survives much longer than the brain. Two hours, four hours, or even more, after a certificate of death has been properly signed, the heart may be cut from a 'dead' body and by artificial means revived so that it will again beat

and continue beating for sometime if proper precautions are taken. Forty hours after a man is legally dead the coats of his arteries may still manifest signs of life. The human body is made up of an infinite number of microscopic living units ; medical men have removed some of these from a dead child and kept them alive and growing in their laboratories when the rest of the body was crumbling to dust."

So the biologists' first argument against survival is, as we have seen, that death is piecemeal. Their second argument is that since life requires such material things as air, food and water for its maintenance, it cannot exist when these supports are wanting. For its existence, the living spirit of the human body must consume and transform energy, consciousness, feeling, memory, will—all that we count mind—disappear from the living brain the moment we withhold its supply of oxygen and energy. "Life as we know it has always a material basis ; a physiologist cannot imagine how life could be possible apart from matter. If our minds are to survive, our bodies must bear them company. The dead body is an extinguished candle."

The biologists claim that they know every stage in the wonderful miracle which transforms a particle of living matter (the ovum in which every human life takes its beginning),—smaller than the head of the finest pin—into grown men and women. "We have followed in the womb every change that carries the human body up the scale of life from the simplest beginnings to the most elaborate endings. We begin as a microscopic unit of protoplasm and we end as a multi-millioned colony of living cells. We see great battalions of these cells marshalled to carry on the work of the nervous system ; we see cousin battalions arranged to form muscular engines ; others are specialized to serve the lowly purpose of living bone levers. We see the elaboration of these delicate living instruments—the eye and the ear. Even in the life of the body there is death ; certain units are ever in the process of birth, others in process of death."

Naturally it will be asked : How are we to explain the elaborate and miraculous changes that transform a simple unit of living matter into an adult human body?—Who or what guides and superintends these intricate arrangements of the living cells? Where did life come from? Is it born out of a combination of matter, or life itself draws suitable constituents around it? These are questions on the answers of which depends a great deal of what we can legitimately conclude

about immortality. Unfortunately Sir Arthur confesses that biologists "do not know how life began" and "they have no explanation to offer of its inner significance and ultimate meaning." They find simply that life is indissolubly connected with matter and they are content to record this fact.

So much about life. What about mind? Is mind independent of matter? Just as the biologists say that life cannot exist without a material basis, so do the materialists declare that mind cannot exist without matter or rather that mind is the product of matter. The quarrel whether the body produces the mind or the mind the body, is an ancient one. It is not yet proved that the body produces the mind. What we empirically observe is that mental activity has a physiological parallel, and that changes in the body, especially in the nerves and the brain, have a remarkable effect on the mind. That the body is somehow continuous with the mind, we are convinced every minute of our life. The story of the young *rishi* in the Chhandogya Upanishad, who having fasted long forgot the Vedic texts, is typical. Food tremendously influences the mind. If body and mind were unconnected, their mutual influence would have been impossible. The common conceptions of mind and matter fail to explain this continuity. We are therefore forced to conclude that matter and mind are not really what we commonly conceive them to be. Matter must be much finer than so-called matter.

It is not sufficiently realised in this country that the present is again an age of the resurgence of materialism. We saw one phase of materialism in the last century. That was fought and defeated. Since then materialism has been giving further and further proofs in its support. It has lost its crude features. The conception of matter has become very fine. The human mind also has been subjected to strict scrutiny. Experimental psychology is an established science. Now it is found that a large part of the average mental activity of man is most often the product of physical changes. Facts have been observed and discovered which incontestably prove that mind is not so mental as is generally supposed. Thus when materialists assert that the mind is only a function of matter, they stand on surer grounds to-day than their predecessors did a few decades back.

The present claims of materialism so far as they are legitimate, are not antagonistic to Hindu thought. The domain of matters over the mind or rather the materiality (in the true sense) of mind is well recognised by it. This fact is well-

known to all who have come in intimate touch with practical Hinduism. Defects in the body are always considered as bars to spiritual progress. It is said that Swami Vivekananda as a child fell down the stairs and sustained a slight wound on his forehead. In later times Sri Ramakrishna observed that had it not been for this, a tremendous spiritual energy would have been manifested in the Swami and its impetus would have been too strong to be borne by the world. Slightest impurities in food are considered as obstructions to spiritual progress. All these form the knowledge that mind is one with matter (or rather matter is one with mind) and cannot escape its contamination.

We have no hesitation in admitting the legitimate claims of materialism. Only unfortunately, materialism itself is not sufficiently discriminative. It fails to recognise two important facts: First, that matter is being fast dematerialised. It is no longer matter in the ordinary sense. Every atom now appears to be a centre and repository of infinite power and its possibilities are immeasurable. Secondly, that it cannot fully explain our inner, mental, being and consciousness; and that the domain of matter over mind, which has to be recognised, can be explained only by conceiving matter as kindred with the mind.—It is because matter is intrinsically the same as mind that its gross aspects can influence the mind. For the close relation of mind and matter cannot be explained by conceiving the mind as material,—our inner experience will stoutly refuse it. Hindu thought, while it recognises the claims of materialism, insists that matter should be conceived as being potentially mental and spiritual; that in so-called matter particles, the material aspect is manifest to our normal sense, and that they are capable of manifesting their higher aspects and being assimilated into our mental and spiritual being, however unbeknown to our normal consciousness the process might be. All things are *all* potentially and kinetically, and are capable of manifesting their physical, mental or spiritual beings in an ascending or descending scale.

There is another difficulty which the material explanation of mind cannot solve. It is undeniable that the human mind is purposive in its actions. The whole mental life of man is reaching towards greater and greater perfection of knowledge and moral life. It conceives the entire universe as a unitary system. Can we conceive matter particles as producing this purposiveness? Does matter then remain matter?

Again, even if all mentations were explainable by matter,

matter can in no sense explain our self-consciousness. Here no explanation or evidence except that of our own self is possible, and that is decisively against materialism.

Let us study the analogy of the flame of the candle,—that picturesque argument of the materialists. What is the flame of the candle? When a candle is lighted, a disturbance is created among its molecular constituents, combustion sets in, and there is heat and light, what we call flame. If the candle be fed with more and more molecules, it would last for a long time with its flame, soul, intact. But the molecules are consumed, they get out of the candle in changed forms, and the candle eventually dies with its flame extinguished. Is man's life akin to this? Let us suppose that his soul-life is the flame, which was lighted in his mother's womb. The body is the fuel, the nerves and the brain the wick, mental energy and knowledge heat and light. So long as the body supplies enough food, the flame, soul-life, lasts, with the want of food, the body and mind die. The similarity seems complete. But there is undeniably one element in man, which is lacking in the candle,—it is his *self-consciousness*. Has the candle self-consciousness? Does it feel as "I am," even as man feels, as an entity quite apart from body and mind and yet somehow related to them? When scientists compare the soul to a flame, they ignore this extra element in the soul-life, for which there is no parallel in the candle. We cannot argue that the flame also has self-consciousness, though we may not know it. For this assumption will cut directly at the root of materialism. If matter were to have self-consciousness, it would not be matter, it would be spirit. Matter, as we conceive it and as scientists claim it to be, knows neither itself nor others. When the flame of a candle lights up its contiguous objects, it itself does not know it; it is only to beings having souls and consciousness that this lighting up has meaning. Look on the other hand at man. By the light of the flame that is in him, he not only knows his self-activity, but also knows the activities of other objects. Matter cannot do that. If man were matter, man could not do that. What explanation have materialists to offer of this peculiarity? It may be said that this peculiarity also belongs to matter. When matter and its actions are gross, it does not manifest this peculiarity, but with its refinement and complexity as in man, it does. But this argument gives materialism away, —matter becomes spirit.

Life also is similarly unexplained by materialistic theories.

We have mentioned the biologists' inability to explain the origin of life. "In spite of the efforts of thousands of workers," says Le Bon, "physiology has been unable to tell us nothing of the nature of these forces that produce the phenomena of life. They have no analogy with those that are studied in physics." When we study the locomotion, digestion, growth, regeneration or reproduction of living beings, we do not find mechanical theories adequate to explain them. There is a mysterious something which no materialistic theories can explain. Even lowly organisms show such initiative as no machine can ever conceivably do. Sometimes we hear of life being produced in the laboratory. Nothing like that has yet come about.

"Jacques Loeb discovered that he could fertilize the egg of a sea-urchin with a salt solution or the prick of a pin ; he concluded, hilariously, that he had proved the mechanical nature of reproduction. In truth he had merely shown that in certain cases the female organism can of itself generate offspring without even that casual assistance to which nature limits the male ; he had rediscovered that peculiar parthenogenesis which biologists had known for a few thousand years. That the female herself, was hardly as mechanical as the pin, or as simply chemical as the salt, might go without saying ; indeed the performance of the unaided female seems a little more marvelous than that of her more fortunate sisters. It is also more ominous, as it indicates that the emancipation of the female sex will in our century proceed to unpleasant extremes.

"Far more revealing than these experiments of Loeb were the allied discoveries of Hans Driesch. Driesch had been brought up in the laboratory of Ernst Haeckel at Jena ; he had every inducement to be a mechanist of the purest dye, but he found phenomena undreamed of in his master's philosophy. He cut a fertilized egg in half, and nevertheless it developed normally. He haphazardly disarranged the cells after the second division, and nevertheless the organism developed normally. He disarranged the cells after the third division, with the same results."

Can two machines cohabit to produce a third machine? Let us also imagine that certain parts of the parent-machines coalesce to form the model of the new one ; that the model produces the complete machine by spontaneously dividing into two, into four, into eight, and the more it divides, the more it becomes one! Can anything be more absurd?

To us the very recognition of the existence of the mysteri-

ous phenomenon called life which no physical theories can explain, appears to be an admission of the truth of immortality. What is that power which so brings together matter particles as to make an organism and to create the phenomena of life? That power is not in matter, it is outside it. Where does it come from? Where does it go when an organism dies? Whence it comes, whither it goes, no materialist can ever determine.

We have mentioned the biologists' argument that all their observations show that life is always associated with matter. In our opinion that proves nothing. They are simply making their ignorance an argument. Unless they try to see discarnate life, they will always find life associated with matter. By their own admission, the biologists know nothing of where life comes from. They know life only in its middle state, they know nothing of its origin or its ends, and from a partial knowledge no correct conclusion is possible. There are facts, on the other hand, which do show that life and consciousness can subsist without their usual material associations. The case of the Hindu monk, Haridas, putting himself in a box and being interred in a grave which was carefully closed with earth and rising up from it after forty days, is well-known. His nostrils were closed with wax, so he could not breathe; and when he was taken out of the sealed box, an English physician carefully examined him,—he was medically dead, there was no pulsation of the heart, the temples or the arm. He had remained in this "dead" condition for forty days; yet within half an hour of his disinterment, he could talk freely with all. How did the monk's life subsist so long, if material association were essential to its existence? During all those forty days, the monk had no air, no food, no water; his whole organism was at a standstill. Yet he lived!

The case of Sri Ramakrishna also is well-known. Often while in deep Samadhi, he would show all signs of death. Expert physicians of Calcutta sometimes examined him in that state, and found that the heart had stopped beating and there was a complete cessation of breath;—there was no sign of life anywhere in the body. This happened many times during his life. But though the body was dead, the mind and consciousness apparently existed; for it is well-known that in those hours of apparent death, he would gain high states of consciousness and perceive many supernatural phenomena. These are facts. They cannot be denied. How then can we say that life and consciousness cannot exist without material associations?

Nor do we find the other argument of the biologists that if the soul were an immaterial spirit, death would have been instantaneous, convincing. They mention the fact that apparently dead persons can be revived by artificial means. But do they mean that *all* dead persons can be so revived? Has the process been found invariably effective? We do not think medical men go so far in their assertion. If, then, there are many cases in which artificial means of revival have failed, why not consider that the cases in which they succeeded, were really not cases of death but of deep unconsciousness?

No real explanation is given by the biologists of the miraculous multiplication and arrangement of cells that constitute the human body. It is said of these cells that "that which these cells accomplish in every instant of our existence soars far above all that the most advanced science can realize. The scholar capable of solving by his intelligence the problems solved every moment by the cells of the lowest creature, would be so much higher than other men, he might be considered by them as a god." Such intelligent and intricate working cannot be explained by materialistic theories, unless we conceive matter to be as intelligent as spirit itself. One is forced to assume the existence of a great intelligence guiding and working the cells. Also, we must not forget that human life is not merely an aggregate of cell-lives. Though they are contributory to it, yet human life has a distinct individuality and purpose of its own, apart from those of the cells. That larger life has to be separately explained. Biology has not done that.

The fact is, there are in human beings certain things,—self-consciousness, mentation and life, which cannot be explained by any materialistic theories. If material science cannot explain them, if they are found to transcend the nature of matter, why should we conclude that with the destruction of matter, they also will be destroyed? All reason points, on the contrary, to their survival. The defect of modern science lies in its looking at things from the wrong end. It begins with matter and seeks to conceive life, mind and self-consciousness in terms of matter ; whereas the more helpful and natural course is to begin with the other end, the Self or Spirit, and understand mind, life and matter in terms of Spirit. Could modern thought cognise the whole of reality, it would have at once inverted its present procedure. Hindu thought has always begun with the One and sought to understand the many in the light of that First Principle. Thus it has come to know

that it is the reflection of the Transcendental Self that makes all perceptions real and significant. Itself no part of the cosmic phenomena, it yet illumines them by its own effulgence and makes them exist. Somehow, in an inexplicable way, ignorance, the idea of duality arose,—the sense of the subject and the object. Hence the mind. Mind experienced and desired. And desire created the body. It will be out of place to explain here in details the process of this evolution. Suffice it to say that this is no mere theory. For through countless ages, many souls have testified to the truth of this with their own experience,—have acted on the basis of this theory, gone beyond the bonds of desire and mind, realised their identity with the Transcendental Effulgence and become immortal. It is not through biology and physiology that we can understand the nature of death, but through that which is beyond the body ;—for it is the primal ignorance that has conjured up the vision of the many, made the mind know and desire them, and eventually produced life and body with its sense-organs in order to taste the objects of desires. So long as desires will last, they will again and again create around them a body suitable to taste the sweets and bitters of the world. We carry our desires with us from body to body until they are consumed in the fire of knowledge. This view of life is infinitely more reasonable than what is promised by modern science.

If we ask people why they believe in immortality, they will give us various replies. Christians will cite the resurrection of Christ as a proof of immortality. This argument necessarily cannot convince all. Others will cite the moral argument that unless we assume a future life, the present life has no sufficient moral justification,—here good often suffers and evil flourishes. The inequalities of the present demand a readjustment that only immortality can supply. Another argument which Swami Vivekananda considers forceful is that often when man reaches high states of perfection, he dies. This seems to point to a state in which further perfection is a reality. In fact the purposefulness of human life inevitably leads to an assumption of life hereafter. Man's life-long struggles for perfection are not meant to end in nothingness. Another argument is that man cannot conceive himself to be dead ; even when he thinks himself so, he lives as the thinker of the thought. In fact immortality is woven into the very texture of man's inmost being. All false knowledge is capable of being eradicated by a knowledge of truth. If belief in immortality were false, man could at least conceive himself to be mortal. But no

stretch of intelligence or imagination can make this conception possible. This sheer inability is a convincing argument. In a sense our fear of death is itself a proof of our post-mortem existence. Why are we afraid of death? If man be only a combination of atoms, mere matter, who is it that is afraid of death? The atoms? That is absurd because death does not harm them any way. Fear of death cannot be explained except on the supposition that a something in man outlives bodily death, and that this something, having previous experiences of the agonies of death, now shudders at its thought.

In an article which Swami Vivekananda contributed to *The New York Morning Advertiser* on the immortality of soul, he gave the following argument in its support. Having shown that human mind cannot get rid of, or conceive anything of the internal and external world without, the ideas of permanence and freedom, the Swami continues :

"Now the problem resolves itself into this dilemma : Either the whole universe is a mass of never-ceasing change and nothing more, irrevocably bound by the law of causation, not are particles having a unity of itself, yet is curiously producing an irradicable delusion of permanence and freedom ;—or, there is in us and in the universe something which is permanent and free, showing that the basal constitutional belief of the human mind is not a delusion. It is the duty of science to explain facts by bringing them to a higher generalisation. Any explanation, therefore, that first wants to destroy a part of the fact given to be explained, in order to fit itself to the remainder, is not scientific, whatever else it may be.

"So, any explanation that wants to overlook the fact of this persistent and all-necessary idea of freedom, commits the above-mentioned mistake of denying a portion of the fact, in order to explain the rest, and is, therefore, wrong.

"The only other alternative possible, then, is to acknowledge, in harmony with our nature, that there is something in us, which is free and permanent.

"But it is not the body ; neither is it the mind. The body is dying every minute. The mind is constantly changing. The body is a combination and so is the mind ; and as such can never reach to a state beyond all change. But beyond this momentary sheathing of gross matter, beyond even the finer covering of the mind, is the Atman, the true Self of man, the Permanent, the Ever-Free.

"It is his freedom that is percolating through layers of thought and matter, and in spite of the colourings of name and

form, is ever asserting its unshackled existence. It is his deathlessness, his bliss, his peace, his divinity, that shines out and makes itself felt in spite of the thickest layers of ignorance. He is the real Man, the Fearless One, the Deathless One, the Free."

In all ages and in all countries, the survival of bodily death has been persistently believed in, not merely as a theory, but as an actually experienced fact by people. It is true that spirits are not always seen by all people. But such evidence as is available is quite trustworthy. It is easy to deny things, but more scientific to test them. And we cannot say that those who deny post-mortem existence, have truly tested it. We do not mean through the present-day spiritualistic contrivances, but through the realisation of that state of consciousness to which the supersensible world is as real and normal as the sensible world is to our present state of consciousness.

Such a realisation, in our opinion, is the only cogent and convincing proof of immortality. As we have indicated above, reason no doubt points to the survival of certain elements of man. But it cannot be denied that where men go after death and what become of them, are beyond the ken of the average man. Of course modern spiritualists have developed certain means of communicating with the dead, which may or may not be believed in. But man need not feel helpless. Even as he is, he has means within his power, by which he can transcend his present limitations and reach a state in which post-mortem conditions will be directly perceived. By such a realisation, the survival of bodily death becomes doubly demonstrated. First, man can directly perceive supersensible beings, some of whom at least have been incarnate before. Secondly, he realises himself as a much finer being than he feels himself in his so-called normal state;—he perceives that the range of body and matter is very limited and that the mind can surely exist without the gross body. He *feels* that he is far above the region of death. Such experiences leave infinitely deeper impression and effect on the mind than our so-called normal experience and scientific proof. The most convincing proof of immortality, in our opinion, is therefore the realisation of the superconscious state. There are of course gradations in this realisation,—the highest alone is the surest proof of immortality.

True immortality lies in the realisation of oneself as the Eternal. So long as there is any idea of change, there is death. So long as the mind exists, man is mortal. Mind exists in the

existence of desires and desires will drag the soul from birth to death and from death to birth. Therefore desires have to be killed. Thus will the mind be free of *vrillis* or modifications and die in the bosom of the Eternal. Immortality is at last attained. Till then, the fear of death and doubts about immortality will trouble the human mind. Spiritualism proves nothing but the continuity of existence ; but mere continuity does not ensure true immortality any more than our present existence does. We are existing now. Yet why is not immortality a patent fact to us? Why can we not taste its joy? So the true way to immortality lies through practical spirituality. We must divest ourselves of our mortal adjuncts and realise ourselves as the eternal spirit. When Nachiketah approached Yama, the god of Death, for the knowledge of what happens after death, Yama did not place before him philosophical arguments ; nor did he tell him of the various *lokas* (worlds) where the dead go. Instead he asked him to learn self-control, get rid of the vision of the manifold and realise the Atman, in which alone lay true immortality. Hinduism has always sought to develop in man this superconscious or subjective sense. It was convinced that the deeper problems of life, on the solution of which not only individual but also collective good and solidarity depends, cannot be solved objectively. Every man must have his own demonstration. And that demonstration is not possible without developing the subjective vision through the concentration and purification of the mind. The larger the number of persons in a community, who have experienced superconscious realities, the more stable and noble the spiritual ideals of that community and the less its susceptibility to scepticism. It is said that even a little of religion saves one from great fear. It means that even a little superconscious experience convinces one of the non-material nature of one's being, and what is fear if not a form of death? So long as there are two, there is fear, there is death. Only in the realisation of oneself as the One Eternal does true immortality lie.

Modern science and thought is suspicious of this subjective vision. The objective method of knowledge, so typical of material science is unduly emphasised by it. There is not a ghost of reason why the subjective method should be considered less reliable and valuable than the objective. It is only the prevailing fashion that considers the objective method more fruitful of truth. The modern age emphasises the objective method for no other reason than that each age has its peculiar tendencies. But the subjective method is not therefore less

correct ; on the other hand, it penetrates much deeper and is alone capable of knowing the highest and inmost truths. If we credit the subjective method of knowledge as much as we should, the question of immortality is at once solved. For immortality is the very essence of our being, and whatever is one is indestructible and the self is assuredly one.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

(Continued from the July issue)

One day Mother came to the upper veranda overlooking the street and asked me to spread there a seat for her and bring her beads. It was evening. Just on the other side of the street, there lived many labourers with their wives and children. It so happened that day that one of the men was furious with his wife for some reason and began to beat her, and at last gave her such a brutal kick that she rolled down with a child in her arms into the courtyard of their house. The man followed her there and gave her a few more kicks. Mother could no longer proceed with her *japam*. Though habitually so shy that none could ever hear her voice from downstairs, she stood up by the railings and loudly rebuked the man, saying, "I say, man, are you going to kill your wife?" The man looked up ; but as soon as he saw Mother, he bent his head and left off beating his wife. Having Mother's sympathy, the woman now began to cry bitterly and the man also shortly regained his senses and began to beg for her forgiveness. We learnt that the fault of the wife was that she had not prepared the evening meal in time.

Mother returned to her room, and presently was heard the voice of a beggar from the street : "Radhe-Govinda ! O Mother Nandarani, be kind to the blind one !" At this Mother said : "This beggar often passes along this street at night. Formerly he used to say : 'Be kind to the blind one !' But Golap said to him : 'Do add the name of Radha-Krishna also to your prayer, so that the householders may hear the holy names and you also may be benefited. What is the use of always declaring your blindness only ?' Since then whenever he comes here, he cries 'Kadhe-Govinda.' Golap gave him a piece of cloth. He receives also coppers."

Another evening when I went to Mother, I heard her saying: "The new devotees should be given to perform the ceremonial worship of the Lord; for theirs is new love, they will serve well. The older devotees are now tired of serving. Mere performing the ceremonies will not do,—one must be careful that there is no defect in them. Any carelessness is bound to be sinful. But of course, the Lord knows that man is ignorant and therefore pardons him. . . The servitor of the Lord must see that there are no hard grains in the sandal paste, and the flowers and the *bel* leaves are not worm-eaten. One should not touch one's limbs or hair or cloth while worshipping or preparing materials for worship. One must perform everything with whole-hearted care and make offerings to the Lord at the right time and in the right way."

Another evening, myself and my sister went to Mother at about 8-30 P.M. We found her sitting in the northern veranda engaged in her devotions. After we had rested for a while in an adjoining room she came and welcomed us with a smile. The evening service at the shrine presently began and we went to attend it, but when it was over we came back to Mother, for it was indeed difficult to be ever off from her when in her place. . . An old lady was learning a devotional song from another. At this Mother said: "She will teach nicely indeed! If she teaches two lines she will omit other two lines. Ah, how beautifully he (the Master) used to sing, so sweetly as if he floated on his song! His music fills my ears; and now other songs seem insipid. And to what a high pitch Naren would sing! Before he left for America, Naren came to see me at Ghusuri where I then lived, and sang me a song. He said: 'Mother, if I ever become a man, I shall return to you, otherwise this is my last visit.' 'Why so?' said I. At that he replied: 'No, no, I shall soon come back through your blessings.' And Giris Babu also could sing well. He came only the other day and sang to me."

Mother's niece came and urged her to go to bed. So we all repaired to her room where she lay down and I fanned her for a while. An old lady was describing to another the psychic *chakras* and the mystic letters pertaining to them. Golap-ma forbade her to speak of these sacred things so openly, but she still went on. Hearing her, Mother said smilingly: "The Master drew for me with his own hand the Kundalini and the six *chakras*." "Where is that drawing now, Mother?" I asked. "Alas, mother," she replied, "did I then feel that there would

be so much interest in his movement? The drawing was lost somewhere, I could not regain it."

We saluted her and took her leave at about 11 P.M.

I had scarcely sat down before Mother on my next visit when Golap-ma came and said to me: "A Sannyasini has come from Benares to beg money to clear the debts of her Guru. You will have to contribute something." I gladly consented. Mother said smilingly: "She had also asked me. But how could I beg money of others? I said: 'Stay here. You will have something.' " . . . Mother whispered to me that Golap-ma herself had contributed three guineas.

A short time after the Sannyasini herself came. Before she renounced the world, she had been the mistress, so I was told, of a large household and mother of seven sons. The sons are now well established in life, she therefore has renounced the world.

She said: "It is wrong to speak ill of one's Guru,"—here she made salutations to her Guru—"but he was very fond of litigations. . . . Now he is old and incapable; his creditors are heavily on him. That is why I had to come out begging for him."

Mother recited a verse the meaning of which was that the truth may be spoken even to one's Guru—that won't be sinful. She added: "But then, one must have devotion to one's Guru. Whatever the Guru may be himself, if the disciple is devoted to him, he will be spiritually emancipated. . . . "

The Sannyasini practised *sadhana* every night from three to eight in the morning. She wanted a pure washed cloth which was given her. To me she said: "Would you stay here for the night? Then I can teach you some spiritual secrets." "No," I replied.

I returned when the evening service was over, after saluting the Mother.

(To be continued)

REALITY

IN MAYA-VADA AND SHAKTI-VADA

BY SIR JOHN WOODROFFE

Discussion on the subject of the reality of the World is often vain and tedious because the word "Real" has several meanings and that in which it is used is not stated.

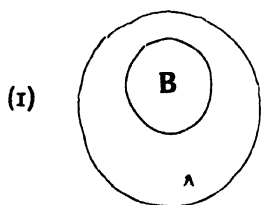
The terms "Absolute" and "Transcendental" also should be clearly defined ; *the distinction between Mâyâ-vâda and Shakti-vâda hinges on these definitions.*

Both "Absolute" and "Transcendental" mean "beyond relation". But the term "beyond" may be used in two senses : (a) exceeding or wider than relation ; (b) having no relation at all. The first does not deny or exclude relation, but says that the Absolute, though involving all relations within Itself, is not their sum-total ; is not exhausted by them ; has Being transcending them. The latter denies every trace of relation to the Absolute ; and says that the Absolute must have no intrinsic or extrinsic relation ; that relation, therefore, has no place in the Being of the Absolute.

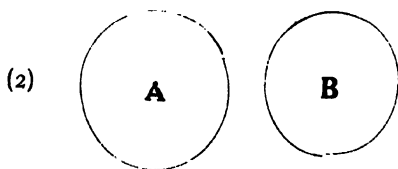
Shakti-vâda adopts the first view, Mâyâ-vâda the second. From the first point of view, the Absolute is relationless Being *as well as* Manifestation as an infinity of relations. This is the true and complete Alogical Whole. Inasmuch as the Absolute exceeds all relation and thought, we cannot say that It is the Cause ; though It is the Root of Creation ; and so forth ; but inasmuch also as It does involve relation and thought, we can say that It is the First Cause ; that there has been a real creation, and so forth.

The Mâyâ-vâda view by negating all relation from the reality of Brahman negates from its transcendent standpoint the reality of cav ation, creation, and so forth.

"Beyond" may, therefore, mean (1) "*exceeding*", "*fuller than*," "*not exhausted by*", or (2) "*excluding*," "*negating*," "*expunging*". By diagrams :—



A is beyond B, *i.e.*
exceeds B.



A is beyond B, *i.e.* ex-
cludes and is quite out-
side B.

In Shakti-vâda, the Supreme Reality is fuller than any definition (limitation) which may be proposed. It is even beyond duality and non-duality. It is thus the Experience-Whole, the Alogical. In Mâyâ-vâda Pure Brahman is an *aspect* of It : but It is not the Whole (Pârna).

The expression "wider than relation" may be thus illustrated: I am related in one way to my wife ; in another way to my children ; in yet another way to my brothers, friends and so on. I am not fully expressed by any one of these relations, nor even by their aggregate ; for, as a member of an infinite Stress-system I bear an infinity of relations. Pragmatically, most of these are ignored, and it is thought that I am expressed by a certain set of relations which distinguish me from another person who has his own "set". But Brahman as Absolute can have no such "Set". It is expressed, but not fully expressed, even by the infinite set of relations which the Cosmos is, because relations, finite and infinitely, imply a logical and therefore segmenting and defining, thought ; but Brahman as Absolute=Experience=Whole=the Alogical.

Since Brahman=Experience=Whole=*Chit* as Power-to-Be-and-Become, it is nothing like the unknown and unknowable Being ("Thing-in-Itself") of Western Sceptics and Agnostics.

In all Indian Systems the World is real in the sense that it has objective existence for and is not a projection of, the individual mind. In all such Systems Mind and Matter co-exist. And this is so even in that form of *Ekajīva-vāda* which holds that Brahman by Its own veiling and limiting power makes one Primary Self of Itself, and that all other selves are but reflexes of the Primary Self, having as reflexes no existence apart from that of the Primary One. The world of matter is not a projection of an individual mind, but its reality is co-ordinate with that of the individual mind, both being derived from the Self-veiling and Self-limiting operation of Brahman appearing as the One *Jīva* or Primary Self. Brahman in appearing as Primary Self also appears as its (logical) correlate or Pole—the Not-Self ; and this Not-Self is the Root-Matter on which the Primary Self is reflected as multiple selves and their varied relations. Matter, in this fundamental sense, is not therefore the product of the First or Primary Individual (Self) ; it is with Self the co-effect (logically speaking) of a common fundamental activity which is the veiling and limiting action of the Supreme Being.

The version commonly given of *Ekajīva-vāda*, namely, that the one Primary Self is Me, and that You, He and the rest, and the world of objects are the projection of Me—is loose and unpsychological. In the first place, "Me" cannot be there (logically) conceiving without its Correlate or Pole—the "Not-Me", so that, by the very act by which Me is evolved from Brahman, its Correlate is also evolved, and this Correlate is

Root-Matter. In the second place, projection, reflexion, and so forth presuppose not only the projecting or reflecting Being (that which projects or reflects) but also something on which the projection or reflection is cast. Projection out of nothing and projection into nothing will give only nothing.

Where then there is Matter there is Mind. Where there is no Matter there is no Mind. One is meaningless without the other. Each is every whit as real as the other. But there is no Indian system which is Realist in the sense that it holds that Matter as experienced by man exists when there is no Mind of man to perceive it. Such a state is inconceivable. He who alleges it himself supplies the perceiving Mind. In the First Standard¹ Mind² and the so-called "atoms"³ of Matter are separate, distinct and independent Reals.⁴ Matter does not derive from Mind nor the latter from the former. In the Second Standard⁵ both Matter and Mind are equally real but derive from a common source the Psycho-physical Potential⁶ which, as such, is neither. "Psychic" here means Mind as distinct from Consciousness in the sense of *Chit*. This Psycho-physical Potential is a Real independent of Consciousness which is the other Real.⁷ In the Third Standard as non-dual Vedānta the position is the same, except that the Psycho-physical Potential is not an independent Real but is the power of the One Supreme Real as God. The world is then Real in the sense that it has true objective Reality for the individual Experiencers for the duration of their experience of it. No-one denies this.

The next question is the problem of Monism. If ultimate Reality be One, how can it be the cause of and become the Universe? It is said that irreducible Reality is, of dual aspect, namely, as it is in relation to the World as Ishvara the Lord or God, and as it is in Itself beyond such relation which we may call Godhead or Brahman. According to Mâyâ-vâda, Ishvara is Brahman for Ishvara is Brahman as seen through the Veil of Mâyâ that is, by the Psycho-physical Experiencer. But Brahman is not Ishvara because Brahman is the absolute alogical Real, that is, Reality, not as conceived by Mind but as it is in Itself beyond (in the sense that it is exclusive of) all relation. The notion of God as the Supreme Self is the

¹ Nyâya-Vaisheshika.

² Manas.

³ Paramânu.

⁴ Dravya.

⁵ Sâṅkhya-Yoga.

⁶ Prakriti.

⁷ In Sâṅkhya one, in Sarva-Darshana-Sangraha many.

highest concept imposed on the Alogical which, as it is in itself, is not a Self either supreme or limited. The Absolute as such is not a cause. There is, transcendently speaking, no creation, no Universe. The Absolute is and nothing happens. It is only pragmatically a Cause. There is from this aspect no *nexus* between Brahman as Godhead and the World. In the logical order there is. What then is the Universe? It is said by some to be an "illusion". But this is an inapt term. For to whom is it an "illusion"? Not to the Psycho-physical Experiencer to whom it is admittedly real. Nor is it an illusion for the Experience-Whole. It is only by the importation of the logical notion of a Self to whom an object is real or unreal that we can speak of illusion. But there is in this state of Liberation no Self.¹ More correctly we say that the World is Mâyâ. But what is Mâyâ in Mâyâ-vâda? It is not real for it is neither supreme Brahman nor an independent Real. Nor is it altogether unreal for in the logical order it is real. It is neither Brahman nor different from it as an independent reality. It is unexplainable.² For this reason one of the scholastics of this System calls it the doctrine of the Inscrutable.

In the doctrine of Power (Shakti-vâda) Mâyâ is the Divine Mother Power or Mahâmâyâ. The two aspects of Reality as Brahman and Īshvara are each accepted as real. The Lord is real but that which we call "Lord" is more than Lord, for the Real is not adequately defined in terms only of its relations to the Universe. In this sense it is alogical that is "beyond Mind and Speech". As the one ultimate Reality is both Īshvara and Brahman, in one aspect it is the Cause and in the other it is not. But it is one and the same Reality which is both as Shiva-Shakti.* As these are real, so is their appearance, the Universe. For the Universe is Shiva-Shakti. It is their appearance. When we say it is their appearance we imply that there has been a real becoming issuing from them as

¹ As the Buddhists said—in Nirvâna even the knowledge that the phenomena have ceased to appear and are therefore unreal is not found.
—Das Gupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 142

² Anirvachanīya.

* Sir John Woodroffe says in his *Shakti and Shakta* (page 74, 1st edition): "Shiva Tattva and Shakti Tattva are not produced. They thus are even in dissolution. They are Saguna-Brahman; and Parāsamvit is the Nirguna-Brahman." So he recognises Parāsamvit (Transcendental Consciousness) to be a Higher Reality than Shiva-Shakti and calls it Nirguna-Brahman which is the Absolute according to Mayavada. He says further: "Where there is pure experience there is no manifested universe." Is not Pure Experience the Experience-Whole?—Ed.

Power. Reality has two aspects. First as it is in itself and secondly as it exists as Universe. At base the *Sangsāra* or worlds of Birth and Death and *Moksha* or Liberation, are one. For Shiva-Shakti are both the Experience-Whole and the Part which exists therein as the Universe. Reality is a concrete unity in duality and duality in unity. In practice the One is realised in and as the Many and the Many as the One. So in the Shākta Wine ritual the worshipper conceives himself to be Shiva-Shakti as the Divine Mother. It is She who as and in the person of the worshipper, Her manifestation, consumes the wine which is again Herself the "Saviouress in liquid form".¹ It is not only he who as a separate Self does so. This principle is applied to all Man's functionings and is of cardinal importance from a Monistic standpoint whatever be its abuse in fact.

Real is again used in the sense of eminence. The Supreme Real is that which is for itself and has the reason for its being in itself. The Real as God is the perfect and changeless. The Universe is dependent on the *Ens Realissimum* for it proceeds from it and is imperfect as limited and changeful and in a sense it is that which does not endure and in this sense is called "unreal". Though, however, the Universe comes and goes it does so eternally. The Supreme Cause is eternally "creative". The Real is then both infinite Changeless Being as also unbeginning and unending process as the Becoming. In this system the Real both is and becomes. It yet becomes without derogation from its own changelessness, as it were a Fountain of Life which pours itself forth incessantly from an infinite and inexhaustible source. Both the infinite and finite are real.

Real is again used in the sense of interest and value and of the "worth while". In this sense the worshipper prays to be led from Unreality to Reality but this does not mean that the world is Unreal in itself, but that it is not the supreme worth for him.

In whatever sense then the term Real is used the Universe is that. All is real, for as Upanishad says "All this Universe is verily Brahman".¹ The Scriptural Text says "All". The whole is an alogical concrete Reality which is Unity in Duality and Duality in Unity. The doctrine does not lose hold of either the One or the Many, and for this reason the Lord Shiva says in the Kulārṇava Tantra, "There are some who seek dualism and some non-dualism but my doctrine is beyond

¹ Tārā Dravamayī.

¹ Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma

both." That is, it takes account of and reconciles both Dualism and Non-dualism.

Reality is no mere abstraction of the intellect making jettison of all that is concrete and varied. It is the Experience-Whole whose "object" is Itself as such Whole. It is also Partial Experience within that Whole. This union of Whole and Part is alogical, but not unknowable, for their unity is a fact of actual experience just as we have the unity of Power to Be and Power to Become, of the Conscious and Unconscious, of Mind and Body, of freedom and determination, and of other dualities of Man's experiencing.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

PUNCTUALITY

Swami was exceedingly punctual himself and expected everyone else to be so. If any disciple manifested a tendency to be late at appointments, Swami was sure sooner or later to give him or her a lesson in punctuality.

Every Saturday at 6-30 A.M. sharp, Swami used to leave for the colony at Concord. One of the young men accompanied him to the Ferry Building, in order to help him carry a heavy suitcase of supplies for the man in charge at Concord. Noticing an occasional tendency of the young man to be a few seconds late, Swami would unexpectedly leave two minutes earlier and be on the street car for the Ferry, while the young man would be left behind knowing that because of his tardiness Swami was carrying the heavy suitcase alone.

In pursuance of this same idea of punctuality, Swami had clocks installed in the monastery, the office hallway, the temple auditorium, and elsewhere in the building and deputized one of the young men to keep them all timed to the exact second by Lick Observatory time.

This discipline in punctuality was all the more remarkable when it is remembered that, in the first place, it was not natural to him, and in the second place, his mendicant life aimed to destroy the very idea of time itself. However, seeing

the value of the virtue of punctuality in the character and lives of spiritual aspirants and its important and necessary place in the social and business life of the West, he bent his will to be punctual himself and then required it of his disciples.

Behind all this idea of discipline was an unfailing thoughtfulness in every detail of life, for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the disciple. To their amazement, Swami's mind seemed to anticipate their every thought and to provide the means by which all obstacles to progress were removed. Every moment of their discipleship was one of increasing education, conscious and unconscious. One of his precepts was "Consider the feelings of others. Thoughtlessness is the worst form of selfishness".

EXAMPLE

His constant thought was the influence of example. Early in the charge of the work in San Francisco he noted the relation of smoking to drinking in America and its pernicious influence, especially the smoking of cigarettes upon the health of the youth of the country. So, although no habit could control him whose spirit always dominated the senses and despite the fact that smoking seemed to soothe his nerves and ease the constant rheumatic pain, he voluntarily relinquished it for the sake of example.

Swami always maintained his practice of a vegetarian diet, both from the standpoint of a principle and as an example.

He believed that a vegetarian diet was the most conducive to spiritual culture, but in this he was not extreme. He actually prescribed a limited form of meat diet, for special reasons, to individual students, knowing that all constitutions and temperaments differed, but to the mass his own example and instructions were for total abstinence from every form of flesh diet. Even when some of his physical troubles approached a crisis and advice from friendly physicians and appeals from disciples strongly urged a meat diet for his various ills, he still maintained the example of a vegetarian diet to the end. He had made a careful study of the body-building elements contained in various foods and saw to it that his own diet and that of those under his care were rounded out with all the necessary units needed for a balanced diet.

ECONOMY

As mentioned previously, Swami observed the closest economy in small things. In this he had been trained by his

Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who was a good housekeeper, careful in all expenditures and naturally qualified as a keen buyer. Swami was an apt pupil and often quoted to his disciples the maxims laid down by his Master, one of which was: "Only be satisfied with any purchase when you are fully convinced that you have received the very utmost for the money spent." Of course, this was meant in a broad sense, as Sri Ramakrishna with his generous disposition could never be niggardly, simply implying that business should be conducted on business principles even by spiritually-minded people.

In India these precepts came into practical expression in the successful publication of the fortnightly magazine "UDBODHAN" and in America in the building of the first Hindu Temple in the Western world with all of the activities associated with it.

MONEY

Swami regarded money as sacred and taught his disciples that no money could belong to them—the heirs of immortal blessedness. Money only passed through their hands and theirs was the responsibility of expending it wisely to the best advantage, but under no circumstances were they to regard it as their own. Swami himself was a perfect example of all this. Notwithstanding his many activities, no one could ever find in him a single worldly thought. In building the Temple and the subsequent addition of the third story with its roof and towers, Swami found it necessary to execute a mortgage for the unsubscribed balance of the building cost, but he never allowed the thought of this mortgage to stand in the way of his other plans for the extension of the work. When the money was needed for the other plans it magically came to hand from somewhere.

Meanwhile, from time to time, Swami made purchases of real estate in various growing sections of San Francisco and vicinity with the idea that, as the value of city real estate increased, in a few years the increase would substantially liquidate the mortgage. This he did not live to see.

First and last Swami was always a Sannyasin. He was always willing to endure any hardship or privation. When called away on journeys he would frequently patronize cheap hotels and eating places that others might feel willing to follow his example.

On the other hand, however, he was always particular about personal appearance. He always desired the students

to be neat in appearance and to dress as well as their station in life would allow, as such things had a bearing on their self-respect and the opinion of others regarding the cause they represented. At the Ashrama classes, the reverse was the case. There the students had to practice forgetfulness of personal appearance, to help subdue the ego and live only in an atmosphere of spiritual recollection.

DISCIPLINE

To repeat, Swami insisted on discipline for the disciple, and would hesitate at nothing for his good. Once a disciple, the rules might not be broken. For repeated infractions, disciples were dismissed but always the way back was open if an assurance was given of a sincere determination to conform to the rules.

Swami's spirit of forgiveness was divine. He truly obeyed the Scriptural injunction of "seventy times seven". "Some day they will understand" were the words of assurance which he spoke of those who misjudged his motives.

That mind which had been illumined and filled with the love divine could never hold any feeling of animosity against anyone, no matter what wrong they may have committed or how unjustly they criticised.

Any methods of discipline that were employed were unflinching and only for the highest good of the one at fault.

DIVINE UNSELFISHNESS

It was to be expected that the direct disciples who sat at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna and passed through all the steps of discipleship prescribed by the Master, could not but partake everyone according to his capacity of the qualities flowing from the Master's divine presence.

The force of that divine example developed in every disciple his latent tendencies to the full, nor would the Master be satisfied with anything less. Utter selflessness, willingness to completely sacrifice for all, particularly the poor and lowly, were absolute requirements of their discipleship.

To their credit be it said that none were found wanting. In Swami Trigunatita these qualities were apparent even from childhood and the Master's touch brought them quickly into the fullest expression. The deep hearty appeal which the contact with Swami held for every class of Society in the West had a large part of its foundation in these traits. Before their very eyes and in close relation to their own lives

was the example in actual practice of virtues which they had hitherto held as precepts only. The magnet of selflessness drew them despite preconceived ideas and they learned to find in one from the shores of India, a source of divine inspiration and wisdom.

HIS GREAT HUMILITY

When selflessness is enthroned in the heart of the seeker after truth and the mind becomes illumined from the spirit within, there comes to the devotee an overwhelming realization of the vastness of Divine Omnipotence and the tremendous power of Divine Love, before which, the utter nothingness of the ego stands revealed.

In such a great soul this results in an adjustment of standards in the light of true values, wherein identity with the source of all wisdom and bliss is realised.

The result is a feeling of great humility on the one hand and a true independence and freedom on the other, for on whom shall he depend and by whom shall he be bound, who feels that his Divine Mother is never absent from him even for a moment?

As the deepening dusk at the close of day serves but to bring out in full relief the beauty of the evening star, so humility is the quality by which the character of the truly great shines in all its brilliance.

"Blessed are the meek for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" was truly spoken of humility, for it is only in greatness of soul that humility is seen in full manifestation.

In the Swami Trigunatita this spirit of humility welled up in full volume from the very depths of his being. He who was honoured by the great of his time, yet felt that he was inadequate to carry on his Mother's work and like a child he leaned constantly on Her who was at once the source and the inspiration of all his undertakings. To Her he gave full credit for all the success of the work, disclaiming the least merit for himself and accepted Her will as final in everything.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Swami Trigunatita was often called upon to address different organizations, including the University of California. Classes were also organized in different nearby cities in response to requests. Later on these outside activities had to be discontinued because of pressure of the work at the Temple.

WIDE ACQUAINTANCE

The many activities connected with the work under Swami brought him in touch with all classes of people, all of whom he met on their own plane. Many of them were among the leading business men of San Francisco and neighboring cities, who also attended the lectures and at times came to him for counsel. They were proud to call him their friend and they never forgot their acquaintance with him. The business part of these activities concerning such matters as tax exemption for the Temple property, permission to plant trees on the edge of the sidewalk surrounding the Temple and other matters, at times required consultation with the city authorities. In this way he met the Hon. James G. Rolph, Jr. Mayor of the city, who, with other officials, became his friends. Today, in 1927, the same mayor is still in office and remembers Swami with great pleasure and interest.

WHAT THE ENGLISH HAVE DONE IN INDIA*

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

The Portuguese were the first among the Europeans to settle in India. They have enriched Indian vocabulary and medical science to some extent ; their descendants (usually of mixed breed) spread through all the provinces of India and were a noticeable element of the population in the Maghal age. But the Portuguese as rulers created a strong feeling of repulsion in the Indian mind, by their cruelty, their religious bigotry such as the conversion of the temples of Santi-Durga into Christian churches, their establishment of the Inquisition at Goa, and their rapid moral decline. The Indian territory under their rule was very small in area and situated in an obscure and rather inaccessible corner of the peninsula. Hence the influence of the Portuguese on Indian life and thought has been negligible.

The modernization of India is the work of the English, and it has affected the entire Indian continent.

The Europeans have struck the undefended seaboard of India. The sole condition of their power is naval supremacy,

* The fifth in a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

and their hold on India can be maintained only by a regular flow of reinforcements from their distant homeland in every generation. Thus, unlike the Indo-Greeks, Indo-Parthians, Scythians, Pathans and Mughals, the English have not made India their home, they must ever be sojourners in this land and keep up a constant intercourse with their European home, in the form of the double stream of incoming recruits and home-returning veterans. Their rise and fall depend not on what happens in India, but on the military and political position of their mother country, which is the central power-house of their far-flung empire.

In many respects the English have continued, but in a more thorough fashion and over a much wider area of India, the work begun by the Mughal Empire, and in some others they have introduced new forces which were unknown in the Mughal age. The English influence on Indian life and thought, which is still working and still very far from its completion, is comparable only to the ancient Aryan stimulus, in its intensity and its all-pervasive character.

(i) The first gift of the English to India is universal peace, or freedom from foreign invasion and internal disorder. How valuable peace is for national growth can be best understood by contrast if we study the history of Western India before 1817 or of the Punjab in the 18th century. The British Indian Empire extends over the whole of India as well as the neighbouring lands east and west of it. A peace so profound and spread over such an extensive territory had never before been seen in India. The English have completed and carried to perfection the task undertaken by Akbar, but reversed by the anarchy that followed the dissolution of the Mughal Empire after Nadir Shah's invasion.

(ii) Secondly, the English have restored our contact with the outer world. The Mughals had communicated by sea with Persia and Arabia, Zanzibar and the Abyssinian Coast, the Malay Peninsula and Java, and by land with Central Asia. But even this limited range of intercourse had been interrupted by the decline of the Mughal Empire, when Persia and Arabia, Bukhara and Khurasan ceased to send their adventurers and traders to India.

The English have admitted us to the entire outside world, —not only in Asia, but in all other continents as well,—and they have admitted the rest of the world to us, in a degree not dreamt of under Muslim rule. India has now been switched on to the main currents of the great moving world outside, and

made to vibrate with every economic or cultural change there. An isolated life is no longer possible even for our remotest villages. A medicinal discovery in Paris or Toronto becomes available in India in two months. A poor harvest in Poland or Canada makes people in Lyallpur starve by sending up the price of wheat. The telegraph, railway and newspapers have completed the suction of India into the whirlpool of world movements of every kind. We cannot now sit down self-contained, secluded within our natural barriers.

(iii) And not only have these modern agencies connected us with the outer world more extensively and fully than ever before but joined by the uniformity of administrative system which characterises the British age, they have also been tending to fuse the various races and creeds of India into one homogeneous people and to bring about social equality and community of life and thought, which are the basis of nationality. The process has just begun, though its completion is yet far off.

(iv) Fourthly, the direct action of the State and even more than that the indirect example of the English people have infused a spirit of progress into the Indians. Our best thinkers are no longer content with adoring the wisdom of our Vedic ancestors, they feel an eternal discontent with things as they are and translate that discontent into action by trying to make our State and religion, education and industry, life and thought better and still better. Our most effective leaders do not repeat the pessimism of pre-British days by despising the moderns as a race of degenerate pigmies and sighing for the return of the golden age of the far-off past (*Satya Yuga*). Their gaze is fixed forward. We have now accepted the principle of progress in practice, even when we profess on our lips to reject it and worship our old indigenous institutions and ideas.

One effect of this attitude of mind on the part of our rulers and wiser leaders is the increased efficiency and purity of the administration and the various agencies of social service, by conscious persistent effort. To take one instance only, official bribery was admitted to be immoral even in Mughal times, and yet almost all the officials practised it and no edict of the emperor could stop it. The English in the days of Warren Hastings and Cornwallis, took over the rotten remnant of the Mughal administration, and set about reforming it. Their strength lay not only in the solid phalanx of absolutely honest and dependable English officers (after deducting a small number of corrupt or weak ones),—but also in their perseverance and activity, their long-thought-out plans and ceaseless

continuity of exertion for purifying the administration. The removal of this abuse has been possible because it has not been dependent on the personality of this governor or that, but has been adopted as the policy and pursued as a generally desired thing by the entire European society in India—both official and non-official. The public have cordially helped the State in purifying the administration.

In fact, modern European civilisation contains within itself a spirit of self-criticism and a perennial desire for reform by voluntary effort. The shock of foreign conquest or the screech of a foreign prophet is not required to waken the nation to a sense of the moral canker that is eating into its vitals. The people are too self-conscious to forget the malady in their body politic. It is daily proclaimed to them from the press and the pulpit.

THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE

(v) The greatest gift of the English, after universal peace and modernisation of society—and indeed the direct result of these two forces,—is the Renaissance which marked our 19th century. Modern India owes everything to it. This Renaissance was at first an intellectual awakening and influenced our literature, education, thought, and art; but in the next generation it became a moral force and reformed our society and religion. Still later, in the third generation from its commencement it has led to the beginning of the economic modernisation of India.

When the English power first asserted itself in India in the middle of the 18th century, the country had reached the lowest point of moral decay and political weakness. Northern India had enjoyed a fairly long spell of peace and growth of wealth during the 160 years of stable rule under the Mughal emperors from 1570 to 1730. But thereafter material prosperity had been destroyed, the population thinned, trade and communication interrupted, and culture thrown backwards, by incessant warfare among small States, or between rival claimants to the throne, and the incursions of predatory bands that took advantage of the anarchy and administrative weakness following the eclipse of the great empire of Delhi. Over the Mysore plateau and the Madras Karnatak, the fall of the Vijayanagar empire (1565) had let loose the dogs of civil war and rapine. After 1687, the dissolution of the sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda—which had maintained peace and order in these parts for about a hundred years—left this country a prey to four sets of contending but weak authorities,—the representa-

tives of the old Hindu rulers, the now masterless vassals and captains of Bijapur and Golkonda, the Mughal conqueror (who claimed to be their heir-at-law), and the Maratha intruders. The economic desolation caused by these forces is graphically described in the old Factory Records of Madras and the memoirs of the founder of Pondicherry.

In the next century, (i.e.) the eighteenth, began the succession wars in the families of the Nizam and the Nawab of Arcot, which ravaged this unhappy land for a generation.

On the western side of the Deccan, the downfall, first of the Bahmani Empire (c. 1526) and then of its successor, the monarchy of Ahmadnagar (c. 1600), caused local aspirants to kingship to fight out their ceaseless wars of ambition throughout the first half of the 17th century, while in the second half of that century, the rise of the Marathas and then the Mughal-Maratha struggle denied peace and quiet to the troubled country till the rise of the Peshwas (c. 1730).

Northern India became a scene of plunder and slaughter after the death of the Emperor Muhammad Shah (1748), and this anarchy ceased only with Lord Lake's victorious entrance into Delhi in 1803.

Bengal had greatly prospered under the Mughal peace from the reign of Jahangir (when the last remnant of Pathan power and the refractory independent zamindars were crushed by the Delhi forces) to the battle of Plassey (1757). But that battle had encouraged up-country robber-bands, calling themselves *Sannyasis* or *fakirs*, to flock to the province which was supposed to be masterless after the fall of its old Nawabs. It taxed all the energy and organising genius of Warren Hastings to stamp out the Sannyasi pest, but he succeeded in the end.

In fact, the unsettled condition of the country and the decay of normal civilised life among the people can be best judged from the fact that just before Wellesley imposed British suzerainty over the country, i.e., at the end of the 18th century, there were a million mercenary soldiers seeking employment at any Indian Court that would hire them. These men had no loyalty, no local patriotism, no discipline. The ruin of agriculture and trade over most parts of India as the result of the disintegration of the Mughal empire, drove all strong and ambitious men to seek their livelihood by flocking to the profession of soldiers of fortune or to that of robbers.

Thus it happened that in the middle years of the 18th century, Mughal civilisation which had done so much good to India from the reign of Akbar to that of Aurangzib, was like

a spent bullet ; all its life and vigour were gone. This rottenness at the core of Indian society first made itself felt in the form of military and political weakness. The country could not defend itself ; royalty was hopelessly depraved and imbecile ; the nobles were selfish and short-sighted ; corruption, inefficiency and treachery disgraced all branches of the public service. In the midst of this decay and confusion, literature, art and even true religion perished.

Just at this time the West struck India with irresistible impact, though its full force was concealed for one generation, namely the period from Clive to Cornwallis. Then followed what we may rightly call the dark age of modern India; the period extending from Cornwallis to Bentinck (or roughly 1790 to 1830), during which the old order was dead, but the new had not yet begun, and nobody could foresee what shape the life and thought of India to come would take.

In the interests of efficiency and public good, the Indians were totally excluded from the public service, the command of the army, and the control of education.* The future seemed hopelessly dark to the great grandsons of Aurangzib's generals and Ministers, poets and scholars who found themselves reduced to obscurity and unemployment in the early British administration.

But the destruction of the old order which took place under Warren Hastings and Cornwallis was a necessary process before the new order could come into being. It was a painful, but indispensable operation, like the burning of the stubble on the reaped field, as a preparation for the next crop. . . .

I therefore prefer to call it the "seed time of New India."

At the end of this period, i.e., in Lord William Bentinck's time, we find Indians again beginning to take an honourable and responsible part in guiding their countrymen's thoughts, shaping the national life, and conducting the country's government. But these were Indians of a new breed ; they drew their inspiration and their strength not from the East but from the West. They had acquired English learning and had thus properly equipped themselves for the work of the modern age. They were the first fruits of the Indian Renaissance and their

* "The system established by Lord Cornwallis was based upon the principle of doing everything by European agency. . . . The plan which Lord William Bentinck substituted for this was to transact the public business by native agency under European Superintendence." (Trevelyan).

prophet was Ram Mohan Roy, whose life (1774-1833) exactly bridges this dark age in the history of modern India.

ENGLISH EDUCATION

The history of the Indian Renaissance is profoundly interesting and deserves a detailed treatment. It began with our study of English literature and modern philosophy and science from books written in the English language. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to write books in English and he visited England. The beginnings of English education can be traced even earlier than his time, but the knowledge of English acquired by his predecessors,—whether in Bengal or in Madras,—was limited to the requirements of clerks and interpreters serving English masters, it was not pursued as an instrument of culture by our entire literate class. As early as 1790 we find appeal published in a Calcutta paper by a Bengali gentleman inviting some European to write a grammar of the English language for the benefit of the Bengali people. *

But from 1810 onwards we find English education, at first of the school standard, spreading throughout Bengal, thanks to the efforts of the Christian missions. Two external causes contributed to this development of schools: (i) Lord Wellesley's conquests not only established British paramountcy and gave internal peace to India, but extended the English dominion throughout that ancient home of civilisation, the Gangetic valley up to Dell'.

(ii) The missionaries were allowed by the Marquis of Hastings to carry on their propaganda in British territory instead of being confined to the Danish settlement of Serampur, as they had been by the East India Company's orders up to 1810.

The College of Fort William, which the far-sighted Wellesley had founded in 1800, though it was soon afterwards starved and curtailed, gave a great impetus to English education, by bringing European officer-students and Indian teachers together, and compelling each to learn the language of the other. This college, however, did not tend to diffuse the knowledge of English among our countrymen. Up to Lord William Bentinck's time (1835) it was held by Government that European philosophy and science should be taught to the Indians by translation into Sanskrit and Arabic, and not through the medium of English.

But long before that date the people had taken their destiny into their own hands and begun to flock to the English

schools started by the missionaries and by a few enlightened Indians. English education was not a gift of the E. I. Company's government, though some financial aid was given to it by the State from 1835 onwards. Previous to that date* all the expenses of the schools had been borne by the pupils, the missionaries, or Indian donors and English subscribers. As late as 1850, nearly 47 per cent. of the total educational expenditure in Bengal was met from the pupils' fees and private subscriptions.

The passion of young Bengal to study English literature, even before Lord William Bentinck opened the subordinate civil service to them in 1834, is well illustrated by Sir Charles Trevelyan.

"On the opening of the Hughli College, in August 1836, students of English flocked to it in such numbers as to render the organization and classification of them a matter of difficulty. Twelve hundred names were entered on the books of this department of the college within three days There appears to be no limit to the number of scholars except that of the number of teachers whom the Committee [of public instruction,] is able to provide. Notwithstanding the extraordinary concourse of English students at Hughli, the demand was so little exhausted, that when an auxiliary school was lately opened within two miles of the college, the English department of it was instantly filled and numerous applicants were sent away unsatisfied." ["On the Education of the People of India" 1836, p. 82.]

He continues: "The curiosity of the people is thoroughly roused, and the passion for English knowledge has penetrated the most obscure, and extended to the most remote parts of India. The steam boats, passing up and down the Ganges, are boarded by native boys, begging not for money, but for books. . . . Some English gentlemen coming to Calcutta were astonished at the eagerness with which they were pressed for books by a troop of boys, who boarded the steamer from

* There was one exception. The General Committee of Public Instruction, constituted in 1823, undertook "to take under their patronage and greatly improve the Hindn College at Calcutta, which had been founded as far back as 1816, by the voluntary contributions of the natives themselves for the instruction of their youth in English literature and science." English classes were afterwards established in connection with the Muhammadan and Sanskrit colleges at Calcutta, the Sanskrit College at Benares, and the Agra College; and a separate institution was founded at Delhi in 1829 for the cultivation of Western learning (Trevelyn, 3-4). The Scottish missionary, Dr. Duff, opened his college in Calcutta in 1830.

an obscure place called Kumarkhali [120 miles north of Calcutta.] The gentlemen at last hit upon the expedient of cutting up an old *Quarterly Review*, and distributing the articles among them." (p. 167).

From 1835, when Government adopted the policy of giving State aid and supervision to schools teaching English, in preference to those teaching Oriental classical languages, English schools multiplied very quickly, their number was trebled in Bengal in the next five years (1836-40). Another impetus was given to the movement by Sir Henry Hardings, who, on 10th October 1844, issued a resolution announcing that in future preference would be given, in first appointments, to candidates educated in the Government English schools. Ten years rolled by, and then our educational edifice was crowned by the establishment of a University on the model of the London University in each of our three Presidencies,—as ordered in the Despatch of 1854 and passed by legislation in 1857.*

* From this rapid survey of the beginning and establishment of English rule in India, as given in Prof. Sarkar's article, the unwary reader may be led to infer that the Indians all along remained passive and dull under the growing foreign influence. Whereas it is quite true that the meeting of the East and the West in India was accomplished mainly through the agency of the English and that India in seeking to adjust herself with the modern world has to adopt many Western ideas and forms, it will be quite unhistorical to think that India passively swallowed things without any consciousness of her precious heritage—a heritage which, as is being increasingly realised, has a very potent and significant message for India and the world. What happened is this: India naturally was in a very weak condition at the disruption of the Mughal rule. When the Western culture was introduced, India could not make an immediate response. But very soon the undying ancient spirit asserted itself. It is very significant that Sri Ramakrishna who represents the highest synthesis of Eastern and Western thought, was born in a village where the Western culture was totally unknown, and that his upbringing and self-realisation were absolutely untouched by any direct or indirect Western influence. Swami Dayananda who also represented modernism to a degree in his teaching and outlook was a monk and scholar of the purely ancient style. The Indian Renaissance was not, in fact, a *gift* of the English, but a product of the Indian spirit seeking adjustment with the new and foreign outlook and culture. Ram Mohan Roy who was a pioneer of the new era in India, surely drew his main inspiration from the Upanishads. It will be dishonouring his memory to say that he drew his strength and inspiration from the West and not from the East. Similarly, to say that the progressiveness of modern India is a *gift* of the English is to deny all the past progress and achievements of India. No race can rise up to new situations or even learn new lessons, unless it has the motive power already within itself. The new situation and the circumstances may have been created by the English, but the tendency and power to meet them are surely India's. It does not take away from the originality of any nation if it assimilates foreign forms and ideas to serve its own intrinsic purpose.—Ed.

THE HINDU AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

By S. T.

[We extract the following interesting article from *The Century Magazine*, (New York), May, 1928. It is the third in a series entitled *A Modern in Search of Truth*, the first and the second being on Christianity, and Mental Science and Occultism (including Theosophy). The *Century* Editor thus introduces the writer :

"For the past ten years S. T.—with the exception of a year's service in France—has devoted his time to the study of philosophy and world religions, investigating each faith or cult on its home grounds and with the best of its people. For Buddhism he went to its stronghold, Ceylon, and to its High Priest, the Reverend Nanissara; for Hinduism to the order founded by the famous Swami Vivekananda, in Benares and Calcutta, and was a guest in the guest-houses of Hindu monasteries. In England, Europe and America S. T. lived with Anglican and Roman Catholic groups, and studied Christian Science, New Thought and Theosophy in their respective centres and with their own leaders, among them Mrs. Besant. He made four journeys to the Orient, stopping with all sorts of people from missionaries to Ambassadors, from high British officials to Eurasian working men and women. His last foreign residence was an international club in London where he lived for eight months among young people of every faith and nationality. S. T. is of course American, of an early Victorian Protestant family, though he himself has never been formally allied with any church or religious body of any description."—*Ed. P. B.*]

The chief dilemma of modern spiritual life in the Occident has been the deadlock between religion and science. Theology and evolution, church and laboratory, faith and fact, have been declared irreconcilable, and any meeting or rapprochement between them impossible. It is, then, highly exciting and a tremendous moment for the modern in search of truth, when he discovers that four thousand years ago in the forest hermitages of her ancient seers, India achieved the impossible.

When our proud Western civilization was yet undreamed of, in those forest retreats of the early Indian philosophers, logic and God, accurate science and profound spirituality, did meet, were reconciled—nay more, permanently welded together—and have thus remained in that country, through the ages. By a curious irony, to be brought to-day from the pure peaks of the Himalayas to the top-heavy magnificence of the skyscraper—sheltering its spiritual starvation. A scientific

religion ! India might pardonably ask Miss Katherine Mayo if this is not as important as a scientific system of sanitation ?

"Hinduism" : what a strange medley of grotesque images that word evokes in most Occidental minds. With Indians there is, of course, no such term. Nor is there, oddly enough, throughout the Sanskrit language of this intensely religious people, any word signifying "religion." There is, instead, the word *dharma*—that which is to be held fast or kept : the law of life, "the eternal and immutable principles which hold together the universe in its parts and in its whole." And within that general law there is a religion, a natural path and belief, for every type of man and every grade of intelligence—from the lowest fetishism of the illiterate Pariah, to the highest absolutism of the yogi who has literally "realized God."

"All religions," said one of the greatest of Hindus, Swami Vivekananda, "are so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite—each determined by the conditions of its birth and association and each of them marking a stage of progress." It has been this inclusive viewpoint, this broad and comprehensive spirit, that has made of India "a perfect university of religious culture," including every shade of spiritual thought and conception.

The Hindus worship God in three aspects : first, the *Absolute God*, the impersonal and changeless Principle, the Unity behind all these varieties of phenomenal life ; second, the *Immanent God*, "God-with-attributes," the Universal Soul immanent in and through all (corresponding with the Universal Mind of the Western metaphysicians) ; third, the *Personal God* appearing to man in form—the Lords Krishna, Rama, Buddha and others ; these, like the Personal God of the Christians, being considered as Incarnations of the Second Person of the Hindu Trinity.

Hindu seers say that the Absolute, the Ultimate Reality, is a state of Spirit or consciousness, pure and simple ; unlimited by any concept of time or space, and untouched by any relation. Permanent or absolute reality is that which exists in the same condition throughout all time. The real never changes. And the ultimate object of the Hindu religion, and the ultimate goal of every Hindu—however humble his immediate form of worship—is to "realize" or enter into that state of the Absolute, or all-comprehending and all-blissful consciousness.

But while this Absolute state is Reality, and (Hindus declare) can be experienced, must eventually be experienced by every one of us—our ordinary life is a relative existence, which

has a relative value for us while we are in it. This relative existence is simply a reflection or misreading of the Absolute ; the vision of it vanishes for the liberated soul, but remains for the yet unliberated and ignorant. And this relative existence has two aspects : microcosmic and macrocosmic, individual and collective. Just as the universe and the aggregate of tiny individuals of which it is composed are one in principle and interdependent, so also are the Universal Soul and its aggregate of individual souls that energize the small individual bodies. "*Samashti*" or "collected" equals the Universal Soul or God ; "*Vyashiti*" or "analyzed" equals the individual soul. The existence of the one necessitates the existence of the other.

The amount of good in the world being vastly in excess of the amount of bad, the sum total may be said to be All-Good. Omnipotence and Omniscience are obvious qualities from the very fact of totality. So this is the Hindu "God-with-Attributes," God the Cause and Controller of the relative universe.

• These seem to us highly philosophical conceptions. To hundreds of thousands of Hindus—to every Hindu school-boy—they are as real and familiar as is the story of Jesus to the boy and man of the West. But the non-intellectual masses of Hindus, like the masses of Europeans and Americans, worship a Personal God—God in the human form of some God-man, or Incarnation of all pure and perfect qualities. However, the Hindus never claim any one such "divine" man as the *only* Incarnation and Son of God. Wherever certain qualities and a certain state of "God-consciousness" appear—whether in the Buddha, or Krishna, the Lord Rama or the Lord Christ—there they see and worship a divine being. And to them every holy man is a savior.

Then there are the lesser gods and goddesses whom we call "idols," but whom Hindus consider as attributes of the Immanent God—as Ganesh, God of Wisdom ; Sarasvati, Goddess of Learning ; Lakshmi, Goddess of Beauty and Wealth, and so on. They stand as do the saints in Christian theology, each for some special quality and form of good ; and their images—so little understood by the tourist and missionary—are designed dramatically to call to mind that special quality. Ganesh, representing Wisdom, is pictured in the form of an elephant, because that great beast typifies the acme of knowingness and power. Hanuman, representing the highest Service and Devotion, is pictured as a monkey—because, it is supposed, the original Hanuman of the great Indian epic, who helped the

Lord Rama with never-failing faithfulness and devotion, was one of the monkey-like aborigines of Lower India. And so on, throughout the Hindu pantheon.

The Hindus say that the vast majority of men need some concrete form round which to center their thoughts and aspirations ; and that they use these forms of their images for this purpose, just as people of other religions use crosses, crescents, pictures of saints and images of Christ. In fact, the superstition that has grown up round the gods and goddesses in India, is very like the superstition that has grown up round the magic powers attributed by the ignorant masses of the Christian world to certain saints : ability to heal, to find things, to send children and so on. Ignorance is a human, not a Hindu or a Christian quality. It is a matter of social and educational, rather than of religious, inferiority. And in the older civilizations—Christian Russia, Hindu India—the masses have not had the opportunities that the newer social orders bestow upon their children. Hence the scenes in Hindu temples, and in certain churches of Mexico and Europe, that frequently shock onlooking travelers.

So much for the Hindu ideas of God. Next, as to their ideas of Creation and the nature of the Universe.

Instead of beginning with a suppositious Creator, a person like himself, who created the world out of nothing and man in the "divine" image, and then having by hook or crook to extricate himself from this exceedingly involved philosophical situation—the Hindu begins, like every true scientist, with the facts of man's actual experience.

What is the process of creation going on around us? A seed becomes a plant, grows to a certain point, dies, and breaks up into a seed again. It undergoes a period of rest (or as the Hindus say, a period of very fine unmanifested action) beneath the ground, and once more comes forth and becomes a plant—grows, dies, and again completes the circle.

So with animals, so with men, so with rivers, mountains, great plains, and even planetary systems : everything is proceeding in these circles or cycles. The raindrop is drawn up in vapor from the ocean, changes into snow, descends upon the mountain, changes again into water, and rolls back as a great river into the mother ocean. The mountain is being slowly pulverized by rivers and glaciers into sand, the sand drifts into the ocean and is heaped layer upon layer on the ocean bed, to become the mountains of another age. The planet—our earth for example—comes out of nebulous form, grows colder

and colder, throws up this crystallized form on which we live, and will continue growing colder and colder until it "dies," breaks up, and returns to its first rudimentary fine form.

So with all lives and all existence that we know anything about. All creation is progressing in these cycles or waves, rising and subsiding, rising again and subsiding again. And to the universe as a whole, because of the uniformity of Nature, the same law must apply. The whole cosmos must at some time or other melt down into its causal form—sun, moon, stars, earth, all the things of which the universe is composed, must melt down and return to their finer causes. But all the things of which it is composed will live as fine forms, and out of these fine forms all things will emerge again, and earths, suns, moons and stars will once more be formed. The whole universe, just like the seed, has to work for a period in minute form—unseen, unmanifested, in what is called chaos or the beginning of creation—and only after that can it manifest itself as a fresh projection.

• Out of what then has this universe been produced? Out of the preceding fine form. The manifested or grosser state is the effect, and the finer the cause. The "coming out" of the fine form, the change in position of the fine parts into the gross, is what in modern times is called evolution. But every evolution is preceded by an involution. The seed is the fine form out of which the great tree comes, but another tree was the form which had become involved in that seed. The whole of the tree was present in it. The whole of the human being was in the embryonic protoplasm which unfolds little by little. The whole of this present universe was once infolded in the cosmic fine universe. You cannot get out of a machine anything that you have not first put into it.

This is a summary of Swami Vivekananda's very fine résumé of the Hindu cosmology and of the lessons from my own teacher in Benares.

Evolution is perfectly true, say the Hindus, but it is not complete without the complementary theory of involution. Progression in an eternal straight line is mathematically impossible. More than that, it is contrary to the facts of our known experience—which facts all point to the cycle theory. So the Hindus—their philosophers of 4000 years ago—have the honor of out-sciencing science in their logical analysis of the universe. And their conclusion is that there is no such thing as any primal "creation," any more than there can be any such thing as final destruction. (Thus they

antedated the Law of the Conservation of Energy by which not a foot-pound can be added to or subtracted from the ever-constant sum total.) Creation means simply manifestation, the coming forth of a new mode of something already in existence ; destruction means going back to the fine causes. And thus life and all these phenomena are eternal, in the form of a flux.

Every object is the effect of some causes, and again in its turn is the cause of something else. This applies to the mind and body of the individual being, as to everything in the world. No life comes into existence accidentally. The present birth is the result of our own past acts in previous incarnations, as our present acts are determining our future incarnations. All relative life is severely bound by that one Law of Causation, or "Karma" as it is called in Sanskrit. And it is from this endless chain of causation, this perpetual round of the eternal wheel of birth, death, and all these recurring changes, that the Hindus (and also the Buddhists) seek liberation.

For all this is Nature. This is not God. The Absolute, the Unity behind all these changes, the Principle of Consciousness, and Light by which all these are perceived (like the sun in front of which the wheel of evolution-involution is turning)—that never changes. That (according to our definition given above) is eternally unaffected, eternally perfect and the same. And That is our own real Self. For Hindu philosophy boldly asserts that there is absolutely no difference between the soul and God.

Somehow or other—the Hindu frankly says he does not know how—the Soul has come under the delusion that it is in bondage ; that it is this body, this mind, and is in thralldom to matter. We do not know how this delusion with all its attendant miseries originated. But we do know the remedy. It is to lose the individual self-consciousness that creates all our difficulties, and to become conscious as the Absolute, Infinite, perfect and unchangeable One. And this, Hindus declare, is not a theoretical dream of a hypothetical state to be realized ages hence in some remote Heaven ; but a possible and practical experience to be attained here and now in this immediate life. You are not to take God or spiritual knowledge on any one's authority (another great point throughout the Hindu religion)—you are to find it out, and know it actually and personally for yourself.

Hindu philosophers are uncompromising on the point of the entire difference between the Absolute and the relative. They do not, like so many schools of religion and metaphysics,

take the relative existence and idealize it, imagine themselves doing all the things they have never been able to do and would like to do, and call that the Absolute. They do not, be it said to their unique and brilliant credit, create God in the image of man, or Heaven out of all the possessions and powers man would like to have control over. They say flatly that the Absolute and the relative are two opposite and antithetical states. You leave the one when you enter the other. And in the Hindu mind there is no question as to which state is the more desirable.

Finite life means inevitably bondage and misery—always something outside ourselves that we lack and want, ever something more that we are struggling to obtain. Therefore the ideal is the abandonment of the finite and the realization of the Infinite—the One within whom all is contained. And the realization of the Absolute state of consciousness means the negation of the consciousness of our separate individuality, as well as of all relative existence. This is the “annihilation” the West shrinks from—because Western people have misunderstood and misinterpreted this “self-extinction.”

When you are reading a book, or watching an intensely interesting play, in a certain sense and for the time being, your individuality is extinguished. You “forget yourself”—your precious “personality,” your individual relations and obligations—entirely; and you are “absorbed,” as the popular phrase accurately describes it, in the drama going on before you. Yet certainly your life, your consciousness, is not annihilated. Rather is it more vivid than usual, because more concentrated.

Suppose that the drama you are witnessing were to be changed from the limited play in the theater, to the stupendous Drama of the Life of the Universe. Suppose that instead of the affairs and activities of half a dozen people playing their little game in one tiny corner of the stage, there was unrolled before you the play of all the life of the cosmos—birds, beasts, stars, tides, the men and women of this world, beings of worlds beyond and below ours. If that amazing pageant were unfolded before you, and you saw it in its myriad parts and felt yourself merged into the Whole in whose perfection all parts vanished—could you, while absorbed in that great experience, be conscious of or interested in your separate individuality?

Further, were you given your choice between beholding that Drama—the vision of life and the world as it is—and playing one little part in one tiny corner of that drama, tightly

bound by the laws governing that particular corner: which would you choose? Would it not be the cramped individual consciousness that would seem death and extinction—and the Absolute that would seem, and truly be, Life?

This is the "absorption into the Absolute," or Nirvana, so resented and repudiated by us individualistic Westerners. Not extinction, but *expansion* of consciousness. With Buddhists, expansion into Absolute Truth—Nirvana means "the state of *complete enlightenment*." With Hindus, it is the expansion into "Sat-Chit-Ananda": Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss—in other words, all the life, knowledge and happiness there is. Is not this the ideal and strongest wish of every one of us? And if the men of the East have found that such a state is a possible experience, can you wonder that they are ready to abandon everything to attain to it?

(To be continued)

REVIEW

WITH GĀNDHĪJĪ IN CEYLON. By Mahadev Desai. S. Ganesan, *Tripllicane, Mad 15*. 159 pp. Price Re. 1/4.

Mahatma Gandhi's achievements and teachings have certainly become a part of the history of modern India, and S. Ganesan is doing well in perpetuating their record in his publications. The book under review contains an account of Mahatma's tour in Ceylon last year and all the various speeches he delivered there. The subjects he covered in his speeches are too innumerable to mention, but the speeches are all, as usual, full of light and truth and deserve therefore to be seriously studied.

THE PATH OF THE ELDERS. By G. E. Power. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras*. 233 pp.

The sub-title explains the subject-matter of the book.—It is "A Modern Exposition of Ancient Buddhism." In fact the writer explains the fundamentals of *Theravada* (The Teaching of the Elders) or *Hinayana* as it is generally called, under the following chapter-headings: The Great Recognitions; The Noble Eightfold Path; The Soul; Karma; The Five Constituents; Nibbana; The Universe; Deity; and The Brotherhood.

The book is well-written.

THE WISDOM OF THE RISHIS. By T. L. Vaswani. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.* 62 pp.

"In this little volume is embodied the substance of some of my addresses on the Wisdom of the Rishis." All the chapters deal more or less with the central theme, Atma-vidya. T. L. Vaswani's writings are always full of thought. But of course one cannot expect a sustained treatment of the subject in a booklet of this kind.

HIS HOLINESS MEHERBABA AND MEHERASHRAM. By K. J. Dastur, M.A., LL.B. *Meherabad, Ahmednagar, Deccan.* 32 pp.

The writer claims Meherbaba to be a man of God-realisation. The first spiritual awakening of Meherbaba is said to have come in May 1913, as a result of a saintly old lady's embrace, who became his Guru and is said to have brought him the highest spiritual realisation in January 1914. Meherbaba has his Ashrama at Arangaon, Ahmednagar, where he has lately established a school in which boys of all races and creeds are given free spiritual and secular education.

CHAITANYA TO VIVEKANANDA. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. 152 pp. Price Re. 1/8.

The book contains sketches of the lives and teachings of five Bengali and one Assamese saints,—Chaitanya, Sankara Deva, Haridas, Ramprasad, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. The sketches are well-written and afford a clear outline of the saints' lives and teachings. The book will surely prove valuable to all non-Bengalees.

INDIAN CHRISTIANS. G. A. Natesan & Co. Madras. 360 pp. Price Rs. 3/-.

The book contains biographical and critical appreciation of leading Christian poets, publicists, reformers and ministers of the church in India. The following lives have been included in the volume: Krishna Mohun Banerji, Rev. Lal Behari Day, Prof. Ramachandra, Michael Madhusudan Datta, Rev. W. T. Sathianadan, Dr. Imad-ud-Din, Nehemiah Goreh, Kali Charan Banerjea, Paudita Ramabai, Rajah Sir Harnam Singh, L. D. Swamikannu Pillai, Narayan Vaman Tilak, Susil Kumar Rudra and Sadhu Sundar Singh.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

It is with great pleasure that we place before the public the humble work done by this institution during the year 1927. This Charitable Dispensary has been doing its silent and humble work of service among the hill people for the last 24 years through its Outdoor and Indoor Departments. Moved by the extreme helplessness and suffering of the poor and ignorant villagers in times of illness, the Swamis of the Ashrama in the early years distributed medicines to those who came from long distances to them and also went out to succour such as were too ill to come to the Ashrama for help. Slowly the work grew up till at last the authorities of the Ashrama felt the need of a regular dispensary which was opened in Nov. 1903, and ever since have been conducting this work with conspicuous efficiency under the charge of one or another of its members with medical knowledge and experience. The percentage of cure has all along been satisfactory as the figures for the Indoor Department show. The Dispensary administers help irrespective of caste, creed or sex.

The total number relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 2094 of which 1509 were new cases and 585 were repeated cases. Of these new cases 714 were men, 278 women and 226 children. As many as 297 were patients of other faiths than Hinduism. In the Indoor Hospital the total number admitted was 74, a number much greater than in the previous years. Of this number 49 were discharged cured, 24 were relieved or left the hospital and one died. Among them 47 were men, 16 women and 11 were children. Here also as many as 14 were adherents of faiths other than Hinduism.

STATEMENT OF DISEASES (Indoor included).

Dysentery	...	...	30	Skin Diseases	...	...	134
Fever	...	...	221	Ulcer	...	...	19
M. Fever	...	...	49	Burning	...	...	15
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	83	Injury	...	...	32
Debility	...	...	76	M. Diseases	...	...	51
Headache	...	...	15	F. Diseases	...	...	9
Eye Diseases	...	...	371	Worms	...	...	41
Ear Diseases	...	...	20	Gout	...	...	9
Paralysis	...	...	2	Lumbago	...	...	5
Influenza	...	...	1	Toothache	...	...	20
Bronchitis	...	...	6	Operation	...	...	5
Pneumonia	...	...	2	Ozoena	...	...	1
Asthma	...	...	5	Phthisis	...	...	6
Cough	...	...	82	Leprosy	...	...	1
H. Cough	...	...	4	Dyspepsia	...	...	91
Colic	...	...	63	Boil	...	...	13
Piles	...	...	3	Pain Local	...	...	33
Spleen	...	...	32	Tumour	...	...	1
Dropsy	...	...	2	Diarrhoea	...	...	30

Total : Indoor 74 and Outdoor 1509.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1927.

INCOME.				EXPENDITURE.			
Last year's Balance	...	2,605	14 7	Medicines	...	290	5 9
By Interest	...	100	0 0	Cooly & Railway Freight			
Donations and subscrip-				for Medicines	...	21	7 9
tions*	...	465	0 0	Hospital Requisites	...	19	1 0
				Doctor's maintenance			
		3,170	14 7	and travelling	...	309	0 9
						639	15 3
				Balance	...	2,530	15 4

We take this opportunity to record our sincere gratitude on behalf of the suffering hill people to the kind-hearted donors and subscribers who have made it possible for us to do this work of service to our fellow men. We record our special thanks to His Highness the Maharaja of Morvi and to His Highness the Thakur Saheb of Limbdi for their annual donation of Rs. 350/- each which has helped much to put the dispensary on a stable basis.

AN APPEAL.

The figure of the Indoor Department shows the increasing demand on the Dispensary. The Dispensary is a two-storied building with five rooms. The first floor is mainly used for Outdoor purposes and stocking of medicines. Of the three little rooms on the ground floor one is used as a dressing and operation room for minor cases and the other two rooms are used as wards for Indoor patients. These two rooms accommodate 4 patients, a number too small to meet the increasing demand. We are therefore contemplating an extension for 4 more beds with all accessories, which means an expenditure of Rs. 5,000/- roughly, an amount which the Dispensary can hardly afford at present. We therefore appeal to our kind-hearted countrymen to come forward and help us in the matter so that we may be able to open this new ward by the end of the next year as a memorial to the twenty-five years of useful service the Dispensary would do a fitting gift on its silver jubilee day from the generous public who appreciate its work.

All contributions however small either for the building or the upkeep of the Dispensary, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
Mayavati P.O., Almora Dt.,
U. P.

* The subscription of His Highness the Thakur Saheb of Limdi for the year 1927 was not received during the year, and is not included in this account.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Nirmalananda's Tour

During the last several months, Swami Nirmalananda who is in charge of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bangalore, and under whose fostering care a number of monastic centres have grown in Malabar, Cochin, Travancore and Coorg, has toured through various places in Northern and Southern India to the great benefit of the places visited. His tour included Belur, Calcutta, Rangoon, Mandalay, Akyab, Chittagong, Comilla, Narayanganj, Dacca, Mymensing District, Dinajpur, Purnea District, Chapra District, Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Bombay, Trivandrum, Aleppi, Haripad, Ottapalayam and Coorg.

At Rangoon, the elite of the city and the representatives of all communities and creeds gave him a most cordial reception and presented him an address of welcome. The citizens of Akyab also presented him with an address of welcome. Wherever the Swami has visited, he has been received with great respect and cordiality, and his instructions have undoubtedly benefited all who attended his most interesting conversations.

Balurghat and Bankura Famine—Ramkrishna Mission Activities.

As public are aware, our relief measures have been, hitherto, confined to the famine-stricken area of Bankura. We could not begin work at Balurghat on account of paucity of funds, though harrowing tales of peoples' sufferings frequently reached us from that quarter. We have been, also, receiving donations from some kind-hearted people intended for Balurghat sufferers. On enquiry, we have been also convinced about the acute famine condition prevailing at Balurghat. Further we have come to learn about certain affected areas at Balurghat where immediate relief has been urgently necessary. Therefore we have decided to open a centre at Balurghat also, and accordingly despatched a batch of workers. The public fully know that we are greatly handicapped in our present work of famine relief for want of funds. The extreme gravity of the situation at Balurghat compelled us to open another centre there in spite of our very poor resources. Therefore our earnest appeal goes to all to help us with their kind contributions to enable us to continue the work.

It is now about four months that we have started relief work in the famine-stricken area of Bankura. At present, we are distributing rice and cloths from four centres. About 1200 people are getting weekly doles of rice amounting to nearly 70 maunds, covering an area of 120 villages. The total amount of rice distributed uptil now is about 610 maunds and about 1050 pieces of new clothes besides old ones have been distributed among needy persons.

All contributions, however small, in cash or kind, may be kindly sent to any of the following addresses and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Treasurer of the Ramkrishna Mission.

1. President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O., Dt Howrah.
2. Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Bagbazar, Calcutta.
3. Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

(Sd.) SUDDHEANANDA.



Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राच्य बरारिजीवत ।

Katha Upa. I. M. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

OCTOBER, 1928.

No. 10.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

II

(To a Sannyasin,—an American Disciple)

BELLE VUE HOTEL,
BOSTON.

13th September, 1894.

Forgive me, but I have the right, as your Guru, to advise you, and I insist that you buy some clothes for yourself, *as the want of them stand in the way of your doing anything in this country.* Once you have a start, you may dress in whatever way you like. People do not object.

You need not thank me, for this is only a duty. According to Hindu law, if a Guru dies his heir is his disciple, and not even his son—supposing him to have had one, before becoming a Sannyasin. This is, you see, an actual spiritual relationship, and none of your Yankee "tutor" business!

With all blessings and prayers for your success,

Yours,
VIVEKANANDA.

AS WE KNOW HER

BY THE EDITOR

Once again India has to be our theme. And it is well that it is so. For we require nothing so much at this juncture of history as a true understanding of India, her ideals and her ways to their realisation. We are in many respects unique in our choice of ends and methods of procedure. These are now being called in question. Their efficacy is being challenged. We stand or fall with their validity or invalidity. For if the ends for which our whole past has been working, prove futile and chimerical to-day, we become almost a nation without history ; and a nation unrooted in the realities of its past is like a dry leaf before the fitful winds. So we must above all be convinced of the wisdom of our fathers. This is the supreme task before us. Such an understanding will like an armour protect us against the mad buffetings of the present and like an unflickering lamp illumine our path into the glories of the future.

We have reproduced in our last and present issues an article by S. T. from the *New York Century Magazine* on "The Hindu and His Philosophy." Having given an appreciative exposition of some of the fundamentals of Hindu religion and philosophy, the writer has raised a few questions regarding the practical and material consequences of Hinduism. He asks: "If this religion and philosophy is so remarkable, why is it not practically apparent? With such enlightened seers as guides and spiritual directors, how can there be such things as child marriage, such treatment of women and outcasts, such a generally backward, and it seems to us in many ways even degraded social system?"

It will be noted that it is not merely S. T., or the average Westerner that asks this question of India. Even Indians are asking this question. Why, if India is so spiritual, and her ideals so great, are we materially so degraded? Bound in the chains of political thralldom for the last so many centuries and now reduced to the lowest states of economic prostration? Our critics say and we avidly believe that it is religion that is at fault and if we can only throw it off, we may smile our way to the heaven of our dreams.

But it may be pertinently asked, is a religion to be justified by the material blessings it brings, or by the spiritual blessings? Where is the proof that spirituality and material prosperity should go hand in hand? Rather it is found that material prosperity often blocks the path to noble life, blinds spiritual vision and degrades man to the life of the flesh. History has repeatedly shown that material prosperity has often been the prelude to a nation's emasculation and eventual fall. We also find that great religions and philosophies had often their birth among peoples who were at those times suffering from material disadvantages. A nation's cultural and spiritual efflorescence has not often synchronised with its material prosperity. Why then should we think that India's spirituality has failed, simply because it has not been so fruitful of material blessings? Does Hinduism preach truth? Are its findings rational and real? That is the only question we are justified in asking of it. Truth must be accepted even if it means eternal destruction.—Such indeed should be the attitude of one who is an earnest seeker of truth, be he ancient or modern. It is the infinite credit of India that she never flinched from truth even when it appeared in terrible forms and meant the dashing down of the fond dreams of earthly life. To-day we are proving unworthy of our courageous fathers. We have lost the eagle's vision of looking unshrinking at the sun of truth; our eyes are wandering from its empyrean glory to the grossnesses of the immediate life. This certainly is not to our credit.

The fact is, man cannot have all on this earth. God and the world seem for ever antithetical. You cannot worship God and Mammon at the same time. You have to choose one at the exclusion of the other. And can there be any question as to which is the better choice? And is it not enough if we have been true to the ideal of our choice and striven earnestly for its realisation? We know there are some amongst us who aver that India is not more spiritual than the West and that her efforts at the conservation of spirituality has not borne better fruit than the material self-aggrandisement of the West. It is an irony of fate that this liberal view is expressed more often by our own people than by Westerners. Westerners often think differently. The writer of the *Century* article says: "They (Hindus) are the natural spiritual teachers of the universe; and, I believe, have developed and cherished the subtle science of theirs through the ages—at the expense of other sides of life—to give it to us all now, in the day of the world's great spiritual crisis. Their penetrating insight, their

clear and brilliant minds—minds trained in the philosophy of Bradley and Bergson as thoroughly as in their own, and at home in every religion—their superb logic, their uncompromising love of truth unobscured by passion for organization or dogma, their tolerance and sympathy with every form of belief, their sensitive searching for the right path for each individual, above all their understanding of the furthest deeps of the human spirit: these things naturally fit them to be spiritual guides and teachers."

[One wonders if such achievements are not enough justification for the choice of our ends and methods.]

We quoted the verdict of C. F. Andrews on Indian morality and spirituality in our August number. Here is another verdict of a Christian missionary, John S. Hoyland, which appeared originally in the *Calcutta Guardian*. We are indebted for the extracts to *The Friend* (London) which quoted the article partly. Says Mr. Hoyland:

Some years ago the writer of this article embarked upon an investigation into the characteristics of adolescent psychology in India. The method adopted was that of the questionnaire, upon the insufficiency and disadvantages of which method it is unnecessary to enlarge; but at the same time certain general results emerged clearly from the examination of the many hundreds of answer-papers received; and as these results have been substantiated in the writer's subsequent educational experience, it may be of interest to go through them. The use of psychological jargon will, as far as possible, be avoided. . .

In the first place, with regard to the psychological development of the Indian adolescent mind. The following appeared from the investigation to be the dominant elements in each year of the adolescent's growth:—

At ten.—Fear.

At eleven.—Self-interest.

At twelve.—Materialistic ambition (*i.e.*, for money, power, etc.)

At thirteen.—Intellectual, ethical and religious interests begin to show marked development.

At fourteen.—Conscience is very strong.

At fifteen.—Hero-worship.

At sixteen.—The altruistic and religious elements are at their maximum; patriotism makes a great appeal.

At seventeen.—Intellectual interests are at their maximum (with boys), and the critical faculty is strongly developed; but egotistic and materialistic considerations again begin to show a deep influence, whilst disregard for law and discipline are at their highest point.

At the present time and for many years past, the writer has been in close contact, both educationally and in other ways, with Indian

students ranging from small boys of ten or twelve at the bottom of the Middle School up to M.A. students; and his experience goes to show that the general course of psychological development outlined by the investigation quoted above is in the main correct. Especially is this true with regard to the breezes of political ferment which continually ruffle the waters of Indian education. Students round about the age of seventeen are very much more easily swept off their balance by rash appeals to their patriotism than students of an earlier or later stage.

But whilst this is true, it is also true that the student at this stage of his development, *i.e.*, about the seventeen years, is open as never before or after, to religious and ethical idealism. He is ready to resolve to devote his life to his country not only in response to the clamorous cries of political extremism, but also in response to the appeal for unselfish public service amongst the poor and degraded. The stage is rapidly passed, partly under the influence of absorbing intellectual interest—generally expressed in a prolonged bending of all his powers to the effort to pass the Matriculation examination,—and partly because of a revival which seems to take place towards the close of the eighteenth year in motives of personal ambition, especially of ambition for wealth and power, which appeared in a crude form several years before, but because less evident through the four years of idealism from the fourteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth. Whilst it lasts, there can be no question of the supreme importance of this stage of development. It gives the educationalist his golden opportunity for impressing upon his students the necessity that they should live their lives for ends beyond themselves, in unselfish service for their unfortunate fellow-countrymen. . . .

In the second place, with regard to a comparison between the psychological characteristics of the Indian adolescent and those of the Western adolescent. It was found possible, by means of adopting similar procedure to that carried out in certain psychological investigations conducted both in England and in the United States, to obtain sufficient data for, at any rate, a rough-and-ready comparison of adolescent psychology in West and East. As a result, it appears that the following principles may be enunciated with a certain amount of confidence.

The Indian adolescent shows himself (and herself) to be markedly more susceptible than the Western adolescent to religious and ethical idealism, and markedly less susceptible to materialistic considerations. It is possible to formulate this principle as a result of an investigation into the reasons given in East and West for the choice of vocation in life, for hero-worship, for the naming of desirable possessions, and for personal ambitions. The reasons assigned are strikingly higher in moral tone in the East than in the West. But what has just been said must be qualified by the conclusion that the ethical ideals of Indian adolescents lack definiteness, and their conceptions generally are more abstract and subjective than in the West. Their ambitions are also

much vaguer. Their mentality is other-worldly and impractical in comparison with the mentality of Western adolescence.

An enquiry into the attitude towards money—couched in the form of a question as to what would be done with the gift of a certain sum—brought out the fact that Indian adolescents are much more improvident in their attitude to money than Western adolescents. They have less idea of saving, and show less prudence in the uses to which they imagine themselves putting such a gift.

The general results of the investigation show that altruistic considerations make far more appeal in India than in the West. This was brought out in the answers to many of the questions, but most markedly in that concerning the uses to which an imaginary gift of money would be put. The parallel investigation has been conducted in the United States, and showed that the proportion of American adolescents who would spend such an imaginary gift altruistically was amongst girls 2 per cent. and amongst boys zero. The corresponding figures for the Indian adolescents were amongst girls 46 per cent., and amongst boys 27. Obviously we have here a striking and fundamental dissimilarity. . .

It can be expected that the above testimony is somewhat convincing. Even if India be lacking in the secular blessings, she is infinitely rich in spiritual possessions, and if she continues to pursue her ancient policy, she would be doing much better than her sisters on the earth and deserve well of their grateful thanks.

So far we have assumed that India has been lacking in secular achievements. We have taken for granted that the charges brought against her by S. T., which we have quoted in the beginning of our article, are true. But are they really so?

There are generally two schools of the critics of the ideals and policies of India. One school is directly anti-religious. They are frankly for a renunciation of India's spiritual policy and adoption of the Western ideals and methods. They do not deserve to be taken seriously. The other school believes that though the spiritual ideals have been quite right, the methods hitherto adopted in realising them have been defective and thus brought about the political and socio-economic degradation of India. S. T. is one of them. What they propose therefore deserve to be considered carefully. But it must be pointed out at once that India has always maintained that though the fundamentals must remain the same through the ages, the details should vary from time to time. India has never said that the same rules of life and customs and practices should be imposed on people in all ages. With the change of conditions, she has adopted now modes and rules of life. The claim of

those who want the orientation of a new policy in India, is nothing new.

But before we admit the claim of any new policy, let us consider the conditions that it is going to meet. Without a proper estimation of those conditions we cannot truly determine the efficacy of the new policy. And unfortunately, we must confess, the claim of the new policies has always been based on a misunderstanding of India's past. The position and treatment of women is considered to have been infamous. The caste system which is mainly a socio-economic system, has come in for a good deal of adverse criticism. India has been considered lacking in what is called the spirit of progress. S. T. also mentions these defects which, it will be seen, relate to the very foundations of collective life. Are these charges valid? Has India always erred in these things? Our critics, even the friendly ones, seem to maintain that she has. Here, we think, they make a tremendous mistake and this mistake often blurs their vision of the present and the future.

* It is now well-known that Miss Mayo in her "Mother India" has also brought forward these charges. We have read most of the replies to that book. Each of them we have found to be apologetic of India's past and earnestly pleading that we have reclaimed ourselves from our past errors and are doing well now. We do not think that we need be ashamed of our past, that we did worse than any people could be under those circumstances and that the results obtained were anything to be ashamed of.

The fact is, we often forget that India that was should not and cannot be judged by the standards that prevail now. The social and the economic system have undergone tremendous changes in the present age. The present writer remembers the happy days of his early boyhood in his native village and looks to the dire conditions now prevailing there, and is struck by the sudden doom that overtook his village. And the changes of his own village seem typical of the whole of India. In the early years of the first decade of the present century, the village referred to was smiling in plenty. People were happy and comfortable. They were perfectly sanitary. They did not neglect their roads and tanks, and were happy in serving the common needs of the village. They were joyful and there was plenty of play and music. The men and women were strong and healthy, as strong and healthy as any average man or woman on earth. This aspect of the village has now totally vanished. Now the village looks half-dead. There is no sign

of normal life anywhere. People no longer care to be sanitary in their habits. The stalwarts of the older generations are gone and those that represent them now are physically and mentally moribund. There is scarcely a healthy man, woman or child. Music has fled from the village homesteads, and only children play. The newer generations have considerably deteriorated physically. Why this sudden change? How did it come about? The poor villagers do not know the secret of their doom. But others knew and they did not care. We remember how the terrible Bengal famine came in 1906-7. We still remember the dire conditions that we had to face there. There was no rice available in the country. Not that the crops entirely failed. But there was no money. The price had gone fourfold high, and people had not enough to buy with. The little rice that was available in the country had been drained away by the wholesale merchants, and for the first time we had a sight of the Rangoon rice which was imported into the village by truck-loads, and this saved us. But that saving was really killing in slow measures. For the prices never came down again. All necessities became doubly and triply costly, and the happy days never came back again. This famine was the first manifestation of the undermining process that had gone on unknown to us for many decades and eventually brought about the ruin of India.

For it was not this particular famine that was the cause of the prostration of our villages, but something deeper and more fundamental. With the coming of the Westerners into India, India was faced with a new economic and industrial system which was in many respects almost antithetical to Indian systems. As we know, the going out of the Europeans in search of new lands to conquer and trade in, was a fruit of the new awakening that had come over Europe. It had different aspects. In one aspect it freed Europe from Papal tyranny and secularized her view of life. In another it gave a tremendous impetus to the acquisition of new knowledge with the eventual birth of science. In a third, it urged for expansion which resulted in the discovery of America and of the sea-route to the East. All these were interrelated. Out of this resurgence of life, came the new industrialism. We know how the new industrialism has been made possible and necessary by the invention of the steam engine and electrical machineries, which have given rise to large-scale production. This new industrialism was introduced into India by the Europeans. We do not mean they set up factories here by numbers, or taught India the new

industrial methods. We mean that the commerce that they brought into India had behind it the advantages and disadvantages of the new industrialism and set up a keen competition with the indigenous system. European merchants deliberately tried to throttle industries in India,—the case of Bengal cloth industry is well-known. But even apart from those brutalities, European trade slowly killed Indian enterprises. Indian village economics was mostly a local affair. Daily necessities were provided for by village industries. But slowly western commodities with their cheapness and nicer finish replaced the village productions. This process had gone on for decades. But the conserved prosperity of the Indian villages had withstood it for a long time without immediate collapse. Villagers gradually lost their industries and became agricultural in greater and greater measure. But a time came when agriculture could not do enough. And when at last the famine came in Bengal in 1906, the village life collapsed to rise no more. In our opinion the substitution of the old economic system by the new industrialism is at the root of the most economical and social unhappiness in India.

Let us see what followed from the collapse of the indigenous systems. People wanted money and money was not available in the villages. The lure of the literary education had caught the village mind in the meanwhile. They wanted to pass examinations and hold posts under the Government, for that meant cash and respectable position. So villagers went out in search of employment. Villages were neglected. For villages could not provide livelihood any more. And when the active population of a village goes out, how can you expect that village sanitation should be properly looked after? When people are busy searching for the bread of their hunger, it is scarcely possible for them to be quite sanitary ; for all joy has fled from life. People cannot do more than provide bread ; and bread is also difficult to find. It is said that the village cows are underfed and not properly cared for. But how can it be otherwise? When villagers, being deprived of their industries, took to agriculture for their livelihood, the grazing lands also gradually came under cultivation. When it is a question of life and death between the cow and man, it is scarcely unnatural that man should usurp the privileges of the cow. So now there is not enough grazing land in villages. The result has been not only the deterioration of the cattle, but also a scanty supply of milk, and under-nourishing of

children and men and women ; for milk and its products have been for ages the main nourishment of Indians.

Under these circumstances, the only feasible course was for the existing Government to initiate the people of India quickly into the mysteries of the new industrialism. For it is evident that the establishment of the new industrialism in India with necessary modifications was its only economic salvation. For that a new system of education was necessary. New facilities ought to have been provided for bridging the old and the new. But the Government did little in this direction, and the bulk of Indian population were left drifting into chaos.

This is a story the pathos of which can scarcely be felt by a foreigner. Only those whom it concerns and who have felt the doom coming slowly with its growing menace and at last received its stunning impact, can know. We are now a disorganised race, deprived of our inheritance and we are forced with a problem the like of which has never faced any other race. But we do not despair. We shall conquer yet.

But the story is not yet complete. The economic is only one part of it. There remains the social and domestic tragedy yet to recount.

(To be continued)

JUSTIFICATION BY COURAGE

BY WICKHAM STEED

Editor, The Review of Reviews, London

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him; but I will maintain mine own ways before Him."—*Job. 13. 15.*

If any warrant were needed for the presence in this pulpit* of a layman, associated with no church and wholly innocent of dogma, it might perhaps be found in a statement recently written by the Dean of St. Paul's (Dean Inge). He wrote :

"The real trend of religion among the younger generation is away from dogmatic and institutional Christianity, and towards an individual and personal faith resting not on authority but on experience. This movement has weakened all ecclesiastical bodies which are exposed to it. It is quite natural that this decline should be most apparent in those sections of believers who are most in touch with modern influences."

* The City Temple, London.

The substantial truth of these words is unquestionable. What are the "modern influences" that are estranging the younger generation from "dogmatic and institutional Christianity"?

However this modern age may be defined, it can hardly be called an age of faith. Nor can it be denounced as an age of unbelief. It may be an age of transition, one in which men and women of sincere mind are groping their way towards views of the Universe, and of their relationship to it, less dogmatic than those which their forefathers held, yet lofty enough to give some satisfaction to their hearts and minds. It is emphatically not an age of fear, not an age in which men, convicted of sin, seek to flee from the wrath to come by repentance, mortification of the flesh, fasting and prayer. It is undeniably an age of physical and, perhaps, of moral courage, for it is an age marked by willing self-sacrifice in the service of knowledge for good of mankind.

To such an age, what have the Churches to offer? Shall they appeal to fear? Shall they say with St. Mark—"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned"? Shall they discuss the respective claims of justification by faith and justification by works, after the manner of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians? Or shall they not rather, speaking a tongue understood of the people, preach justification by courage, and bid men fearlessly maintain their own ways before God?

Fear has lain at the root of dogmas and practices innumerable, in religion, magic and sorcery. It has been the mother of credulity and the foe of knowledge. It has succoured falsehood and hidden the truth. It has insulted humanity by deeming it afraid to look, open-eyed and undismayed, upon the Unknown. It has belittled and demeaned the idea of God, making Him out to be a resentful, revengeful Being, creating Him in the likeness of an ill-tempered tyrant and bidding men tremble before Him. It has taught that only by confessing themselves miserable sinners in whom there is no health, who have left undone what they ought to have done and who have done what they ought not to have done, could wretched mankind hope to find mercy. All this in the name of a Deity of whom the highest testimony given on this earth bore witness that He is Love!

Many Christian theologians and some moral philosophers have proclaimed that the sole purpose of the Universe and of its Creator is the redemption of mankind from original sin—a sin for the alleged commission of which it could not, on any

fair showing, be held responsible. They have propounded a complicated and abstruse doctrine of Atonement to explain that an offended Deity needed to be propitiated by the sacrifice of His Son. There may be a purpose in the Universe—reason rebels against the thought that there should not be—but this theological explanation of it revolts the sense of justice in modern men. Rather than assent to such a definition of the Creator's purpose, many honest souls have preferred to refrain from ascribing to Him or to the Universe any comprehensible purpose at all. They have disdained to beg the main question, to take as proven the very point at issue. They have confessed their ignorance of ultimate ends, and have been content with such limited truths as they could prove, or postulate, without violence to their reason and to their nobler emotions. They have maintained their own ways before the God of Truth as they perceived His truth. Of them, a great French scholar, whose deeply religious spirit worked under a veil of scepticism, wrote finely: "The purest cult of the Divine lies hidden at times behind seeming negations; the most perfect idealist is often he whom frankness compels to declare himself a materialist. How many saints wear a mask of irreligion! How many, among those who deny immortality, would deserve to be gloriously undeceived!"

There are still, in the Christian Churches and outside, simple souls whose childlike faith asks no questions and is content to believe. These may, indeed, be the "babes" to whom have been revealed things hidden from the wise and prudent. Unlike the multitudes who doubt, they need no physician. But who can affirm that even a majority of professing Christians in this country to-day hold unchanged the faith of their fathers? Is there not a growing demand for a restatement of belief that shall satisfy the heart without repelling the brain? And how can belief be restated in defiance of such finite truths as we can perceive in our own dimensions of time and space? To suggest that knowledge is vain because, in the words of Tennyson's "fool,"—

"All we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool"—

is to ignore the conditions of human life and of human endeavour. We cannot serve God by discarding such truth as our own senses and minds may enable us to apprehend or, even, to ascertain.

* * * *

A part of this truth relates to the nature of the material Universe. How many of us acquaint ourselves with it and

weigh, in the light of it, our own importance, as individual members of the human race, upon an earth that is but a speck in the Cosmos? One of our leading mathematicians and astronomers, Dr. J. H. Jeans, has recently suggested some standards for our judgment in a notable book called "Astronomy and Cosmogony". The moon, our nearest neighbour in the sky, he says, is 240,000 miles away. Light, travelling at 186,000 miles a second, reaches us from the moon in little more than one second. Travelling at the same speed, the light from some stars that are visible through telescopes, takes over 100,000,000 years to reach us; and it is by no means certain that these stars lie on the outskirts of the Universe. Could we look upon our own solar system from those immense distances, the sun itself would be an invisible, and our earth an ultra-microscopic cosmic particle. Upon this particle lives man who, for some 200 years, has been trying to study the science of the Universe. It would be as presumptuous to assume that man's present knowledge is more than primitive and rudimentary, as to assume that mankind can be of great account in the universal scheme of things. We may, indeed, ask, with Dr. Jeans: How did this Universe begin and what will be its final end? We may admit the force of his reasoning that, if the heavenly bodies can no longer be regarded as having been created merely to minister to man's pleasure and comfort by illuminating the earth, the question arises what purpose, if any, do they serve? And if life on this earth, and human life in particular, can no longer be supposed to be the central fact which explains everything, what is its relation to the magnificent, stupendous, almost terrifying Universe which astronomy reveals? Do we not need a faith that we can still hold, even though knowledge persuade us, in the words of one of our deepest and most upright religious thinkers, Dr. L. P. Jacks, that "the ultimate goal, or final privilege, which the Universe holds in store for the human race may be nothing more and nothing less than the opportunity to die like gentlemen"—after the manner of Captain Oates?

Yet, if we contemplate or accept such a faith, can we still call ourselves Christians? Can we still affirm the Fatherhood of God? How is our wider modern view of the Universe to be reconciled with the saying of Christ—"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows"?

A tentative answer may perhaps be found if we turn from

the astronomer's view of the immeasurably great to the physicist's vision of the immeasurably small. Physical science suggests, nay, believes, that the whole Universe is constructed of the same materials, that the visible "garment of God" is of uniform pattern, though its texture may vary. It is formed of various atoms, in combination, each atom being composed of a nucleus charged with positive electricity, and of electrons charged with negative electricity, the sum of the positive charge in the nucleus being always equal to the sum of the negative charges in the attendant electrons. These atoms range from the one-electron atom, which is hydrogen, up to the 92-electron atom, which is uranium. Between the atoms and their electrons there is an apparently empty space the nature of which is unknown ; nor do physicists know what electricity is. They only know something about the way it behaves. And they do not really *know* that atoms exist. They believe in them, by an act of reasonable faith, since their nature and structure are not directly perceptible by the senses, inasmuch as the atoms may be 10,000 times smaller than the smallest object that can be seen with the most powerful microscope. The discovery of radio-activity and of X-rays has, as it were, given men new eyes and has enabled them to conceive each atom and its electrons as analogous to the solar and stellar systems which astronomers observe in the regions of celestial space.

Now, these solar and stellar systems work in accordance with intelligible law ; and in so far as human enquiry can discover, these laws do not vary but are subject to some principle or spirit inherent in the Universe itself. May we not be justified in concluding that the ultra-microscopic planetary systems, called atoms, are equally subject to law and equally embody the spirit of the Universe? If our bodies, which are relatively vast aggregations of atoms, are infinitesimal in comparison with the whole earth, and still less considerable in comparison with the Universe of which the earth is itself a tiny particle, is there not some warrant for believing that, in very truth, even the hairs of our heads are all numbered and that no sparrow is forgotten before God? Can we not repeat, with added conviction, Tennyson's famous lines—

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, the plains
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?
Is not the Vision He? though He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?
Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself are the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?

* * * *

"The power to feel 'I am I'," the consciousness of human individuality, lies near the heart of our problem. Sceptical reasoners have denied the possibility of proving either the existence of God or the existence of man. To them the great French philosopher, Descartes, replied "*Cogito, ergo sum*" (I think, therefore I am). Tennyson, the poet—and poets are not seldom gifted with deeper insight than philosophers—framed the answer more truly when he expressed it in terms not of thought but of feeling. He said, in effect, that men have power to feel that they exist. They are conscious of themselves and of a Universe that is not themselves; and they feel there is a purpose in their existence. Hence they attribute consciousness also to the principle of Spirit of the Universe, and ascribe to that consciousness a purpose higher and vaster than their own.

This is a reasonable faith. It makes an assumption, knowing it to be an assumption, not a scientifically ascertained fact. Then, like the physicists who form a hypothesis about the nature of invisible atoms and verify it by experience, men find that something within themselves corresponds to their hypothesis of a consciousness and of a purpose in the world transcending their own individual consciousnesses and purposes. This experience is the foundation of religion.

But religious experience needs ever to be on its guard against self-deception. When it assumes and dogmatizes without semblance of intellectual justification, it is on dangerous ground. At its best, it is an alliance between pure thought and pure feeling or, if you prefer it, pure aspiration. At its worst, it treats pure thought as Luther once treated reason—when he called it "the devil's foremost harlot"—and lets emotion run riot and credulity reign. The faith of modern men is the offspring of a reverent alliance between pure thought and pure aspiration. It is not faith in the power of finite, human beings to attain either absolute knowledge of, or absolute harmony with, the purpose of the Universe. Rather is it made up of willingness to believe that, however wide our range of relative knowledge may become, there will still be more to learn; and, however lofty our aspirations or noble our feelings, there will still be room for courage in facing the Unknown.

Innumerable attempts have been made to reconcile thought and faith, science and religion. They need no reconciliation. Courageously disciplined, they are natural allies. One of our

greatest scientists, Sir William Bragg, has put the point convincingly. "To my mind," he has declared, "the real scientific outlook upon life, the scientific spirit, depends upon our recognising that it is of the first importance to know as much as we can about things and our relation to them, to understand what we are doing, to learn from the experience of others and, not stopping at that, to find out more for ourselves so that our work may be the best of which we are capable. That is what science stands for. I know very well that it is only half the battle. There is also the great driving force which we call religion. From religion a man's purpose may come; from science his power to achieve it. Sometimes people ask if religion and science are not opposed to one another. They are—in the sense that the thumb and fingers of my hand are opposed to each other. It is an opposition by means of which anything can be grasped."

Yet, some may object, science has played havoc with the Christian creeds. If Christianity is the true, or the truest, religion, how can science, that has tended to demolish parts of it, be its ally? Did not Darwin, with his hypothesis of evolution, discredit the Biblical story of the Creation? Have not the "Higher Critics" ruined the belief of many a simple soul in the plenary inspiration and unquestioned authority of the Christian scriptures? Have they not appended notes of interrogation to all the Gospels, and shown the Fourth Gospel in particular to have reflected neo-Platonic philosophy and other strands of pagan thought? Where, moreover, in the whole range of science, is there evidence of the redeeming purpose which Christians ascribe to their God?

These questions are pertinent. Science has wrought havoc with many an ancient article of Christian belief. Yet, despite the destruction it has wrought, despite or because of the wrappings it has torn away, it has brought out in increasing grandeur the central fact of Christianity, the figure of Christ, and the sublimity of his teaching. What reverent scientist cavils at His saying to the Woman of Samaria: "God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in Truth"? In such worship is there no saving grace? Have not the investigations of archeologists and historians proved that revelations of religious truth have been persistent and continual? Was there not, in Egypt, thirteen centuries before Christ, and two centuries before Moses, a Pharaoh, Akhnaton, who proclaimed a God of Love, a universal Spirit, the source of the sun's energy and light, whose children

men are and whose glory the heavens show forth? So exalted was his conception of the Deity that he would suffer no graven image of him to be made, and conceived the whole duty of man as that of living and worshipping in spirit and in truth. Shall we doubt his perception of the Divine Spirit because he was pre-Christian? Shall we doubt the same perception in men more modern—poets, thinkers, saints and scientists? Has human consciousness no meaning? Is man's sense of responsibility towards his fellow-men—which is morality—and towards the Spirit of Truth—which is religion—of no account? If we argue that our freedom of will and, therefore, our responsibility, is an illusion; if we say that we are irresponsible microscopic cogs in an immense cosmic gear, we overlook the truth that our consciousness, our power to feel "I am I," is a fact as well established as any other fact—a fact, moreover, that makes it incumbent upon us, whatever the degree of our trust in God, fearlessly to maintain our own ways before Him.

And when death comes—death that gives dignity to life and saves it from being a sordid comedy—shall we not meet the "Arch Fear" without flinching? In all the annals of the saints I know nothing finer than the letter written to Sir James Barrie by Captain Scott of the Antarctic while waiting for death with his companions in their frigid tent: "We are pegging out in a very comfortless spot. Hoping this letter may be found and sent to you, I write you a word of farewell.....We are in a desperate state—feet frozen, no fuel and a long way from food, but it would do your heart good to be in our tent, to hear our songs and our cheery conversation.....(Later). We are very near the end. We did intend to finish ourselves when things proved like this, but we have decided to die naturally without."

This was Courage, indeed, this "greeting of the Unseen with a cheer". May it not be that in the Unseen, thus faced, upright and fearless souls will be justified before the Eternal Light in which there is no darkness nor shadow of turning?

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES

Thus Swami Ramakrishnananda (or Sasi as he was called as a boy), a prominent monastic disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, described an incident of the Master's life while he was lying ill at Cossipore :

"There came the question who was to take care of Sri Gurumaharaj (Sri Ramakrishna). We were at that time all

studying in the Colleges. Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) was just preparing to pass his B.L. degree ; I, my B.A.; and Sarat (Swami Saradananda), I believe, his F.A. But we could not fix our minds on our books, so we gave up attending the classes and devoted all our time to attending on the Master.

"With so many of us there, it became necessary to hire a cook, and we got a man from his village. He was a Brahmin but such a rustic that he could not even sit cross-legged without great difficulty. He was used to working all day in his fields and when he sat, he squatted on his legs. His cooking was so bad that we all began to go down under it. Then Holy Mother begged so hard to come and cook for Gurumaharaj that he said she might come.

"One day, however, for some reason she was not there, so the cook carried Gurumaharaj's food to him. With great difficulty he got up the stairs, so lumbering and awkward was he ; and when he had placed the food before Gurumaharaj, he wanted to run away. But Gurumaharaj called him back and told him to sit down. Although he was such a rustic, he was simple ; there was absolutely no crookedness in him. Gurumaharaj merely reached over and touched him and at once the man went into *Samadhi*. He stayed in that state for fully two hours. When he came back to his senses and opened his eyes, they were fiery red and he asked me : 'Where am I?' He could not walk and Gurumaharaj asked me to lead him away. As I did so, I asked him what he had been experiencing. 'Oh ! I was not here,' he replied. 'All this while I have been worshipping my Divine Mother.' "

This interesting incident has been recorded in a recently published book on Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples by a devout American follower of the Master, Sister Devamata.*

Of Sri Ramakrishna, the story can never be exhaustively told. Thousands saw him during his life-time, and to most of them the experience was often out of the common. Many came to him again and again and saw him day after day in many singular moods. Very few of them have spoken of their unique experiences to the public. Naturally we may always expect more revelations about the Master, though no doubt the chances are getting fewer and fewer with the passing of the direct disciples.

Sister Devamata's little book fortunately contains much new and interesting information about the Master. Though it

* *Sri Ramakrishna & His Disciples*, Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, U. S. A.

is regrettable that it contains mis-statement of some well-known facts, yet we cannot but be grateful to the author for the new materials which she has published. When she came to India, most of the men and women disciples of the Master were living. She became intimate with them and gathered whatever information was available about the Master. Those notes are incorporated in the present book. We are sure our readers will be much interested to read the following extracts.

Of the Master, Swami Ramakrishnananda said :

“Sri Ramakrishna’s life was so peculiar that many things, if told, would be regarded as mere stories. He knew from the beginning why he had come and he began teaching from the time of his birth. Even as a baby and later wherever he was, those about him always recognised that there was something strange and unusual about him, something divine.

“He always had his Divine Mother beside him. Just as a baby of two or three months has a loving mother always beside it to look after it and provide its needs, so his Divine Mother was always by his side. Whatever he wanted he asked for and She, being all powerful and all-loving, at once brought him that.

“In Sri Ramakrishna, there was absolutely no ego left. He could not use the first personal pronoun ‘I.’ He would say : ‘Why do you not come here?’ (meaning to him) ‘Mother will illumine you.’ In him the divine was fully manifested. He preached God, nothing but God, but his whole nature was God-like. We never knew what purity was, we never knew what perfection was, what God was, until we saw him.

“He knew everything. Did any one go to him with a morose or sorrowful heart? At once he would feel it in his own heart and would give peace. Everything he did was for others. He was not necessitated to come to this world, but he came to help mankind ; and every movement of his body, every movement of his mind was directed towards the amelioration of his fellow-men.

“Ramakrishna was able to supply to every man just what he needed. Sometimes a man would come from a distant place with his heart panting for God, but seeing the room full of people, he would shrink back and hide himself in a dim corner. Without a word Ramakrishna would walk to him and touch him and in a moment he was illumined.

“By that touch, Ramakrishna really swallowed ninety-nine per cent. of the man’s *Karma* (results of actions). Taking others’ *Karma* was the reason he had his last long illness. He

used to tell us: 'The people whose *Karma* I have taken think that they are attaining salvation through their own strength. They do not understand that it is because I have taken their *Karma* on me.' We do not know how much we owe to him ; but some day we shall realize what he has done for us and then we shall know how to be grateful to him.

"Ramakrishna was the embodiment of truthfulness. He always said: 'No man can hope to realize the Truth who is not absolutely truthful.' Once he had been invited by a certain gentleman to assist at a religious discussion. When the day came, it was pouring rain. With great difficulty we procured a carriage two miles away from Dakshineswar and because of the heavy down-pour the coachman asked three times the usual price ; but Gurumaharaj said: 'I have given my word, so I must go.' He got in the carriage, drove four or five miles and when he reached the house, he found the gate bolted on the inside. He knocked but no one came, so he repeated three times to the gate: 'I have come, I have come, I have come.' Then he got into carriage again and drove back to Dakshineswar, perfectly satisfied because he had kept his word.

"Sri Ramakrishna practised the most perfect simplicity in his habits. Once some one brought him a silver tongue-scraper ; he refused to take it and sent me to buy a most ordinary brass one for a quarter of an anna. He showed that the simpler is the man, the happier he is. His spirit of renunciation was without reservation or compromise. One day he saw an especially fine mango and he had a mind to take it, but he could not raise his hand to pluck it. Another day he tried to pick a fruit, but with the same result. He was unable to lift his arm ; the muscles refused to obey him. 'You see,' he explained, 'a *Sannyasin* should never store anything, so the Divine Mother will not let me lay by this fruit even for a few hours.'

"Ramakrishna could read the true nature of every man. He used to tell us that these eyes were like window sashes ; and as a person looking through a window can see everything in the room, so by looking through the eyes, he could see everything inside a man. Unmasked frankness came to him in certain states of consciousness. When he would come back to his consciousness he would be much distressed and ask anxiously: 'Have I said anything wrong? Oh! I beg your pardon.'

"Christ's teaching, If a man strike you on one cheek, turn to him the other, our Master perfectly exemplified. If he went to a house where people insulted him, he would bless them and come away. Those who would not bow before any man, he would bow low before them and despite themselves they would have to bend a little.

"Although Sri Gurumaharaj seemed so fragile, he manifested at times the strength of a giant. Once with another he was crossing the wide plain going to his native village. Just in the middle there came the cry, 'Decoits are coming.' In those parts these robbers are very terrible. The palanquin bearers without a word dropped their burden and ran away, leaving Gurumaharaj alone with his companion who was at a loss to know what to do. Gurumaharaj, apparently not in the least anxious, stood silent until the decoits had almost overtaken them, then he gave such a blood-curdling yell that they fled in terror. It seemed to fill all space and not to come from any human throat. As he saw the robbers run away he smiled. Then he set out and walked to his village with such long, rapid strides that his companion, although a much more robust man, scarcely could keep pace with him."

But there were also other ways in which he used to encounter the evil-minded.

In one house to which he went often there was a lawless youth who resented the special privilege accorded this unknown *Sadhu*. The man was a fraud, he declared, merely pretending to be a *Sadhu* in order to gain access to the inner quarters of the house; and he determined to get rid of him. He proposed to his associates that they give him a good lesson to frighten him away. Not long after, Sri Ramakrishna came again to the house and the boys gathered in a room beside the entrance and awaited their opportunity. Sri Ramakrishna was taken at once to the inner court where forty or fifty ladies were assembled.

Yogin-ma (one of Sri Ramakrishna's prominent lady disciples) was one of those present. She said that after the Master had talked for a while, suddenly he rose, left the room and walked hurriedly towards the outer court. After a time he returned and without comment resumed his teaching. Later they learned that he had gone straight to the room beside the entrance door where the boys were watching for him and, laying his hand on the arm of the leader of the band, he had said in quiet tones: "So you mean to give me a good thrashing,

do you?" The boy, she said, started, turned and saw Sri Ramakrishna. As he looked into the gentle eyes and at the smiling face, all his resentment melted away and a shadow of shame fell over him. He paused for a moment, then raising his arm with clenched fist, he called out: "If any boy here dares to lay a hand on this man, I will give him a sound beating."

Sri Ramakrishna went back to the inner court and remained for more than an hour. When he came out again he found the boy standing by the carriage. He helped Sri Ramakrishna in, closed the door, and ran beside the carriage for a long distance. When Sri Ramakrishna protested that he was tiring himself unnecessarily, the boy explained that his companions, angry at the unexpected swing of events, might still try to carry out their plan and he wished to be near to protect him. From that day he was a staunch defender and admirer of Sri Ramakrishna. He did not come to the Temple as others did, but he lost all the lawlessness which had marked his nature and his whole life was remoulded.

This boy—then a young man—came to visit the Master while he lay dying at Cossipore.

He had dressed himself as a *Zamindar* in great elegance that he might gain surer admission, but he was not allowed to enter. No word of it was carried to the Master, but suddenly Sri Ramakrishna began to weep, saying: "Why do you keep my devotee from me? I must see him." Then he was told of the visitor.

"When he heard who it was, he had him brought in at once," Swami Ramakrishnananda related. "I was in the room at the time, but Gurumaharaj sent me out and the two were alone for a long while. Then the Master called me back and told me to bring one of his photographs. This he took and with his own hand gave it to the gentleman. The gentleman took it and without speaking a word to any one, ran out of the house as if he was mad. From that moment he lost all consciousness of the world, of everything, and day and night he sat repeating '*Priya Nath, Priya Nath*' (Beloved Lord, Beloved Lord). When all the rest of the community was sleeping, one could hear those words sounding out in the silence of the night. He did not even remember to eat unless his wife put food into his mouth.

"He never returned to Gurumaharaj. Like the pearl oyster he had got the drop of *Swati* rain and needed nothing more. But after Gurumaharaj passed away, he used to come

often to our *Math* (monastery) at Baranagore. For several months he came every evening. He would go straight to the Shrine, sit and meditate there for some time, then go away without even coming to the part of the house where we lived. Sometimes he would sing and he had a very beautiful voice. There was one song of which Sri Ramakrishna was particularly fond and he would sing it again and again."

Such was Sri Ramakrishna's method of transforming a life. Said Swami Ramakrishnananda: "He never condemned any man. He was ready to excuse everything. He used to tell us that the difference between man and God was this: If a man failed to serve God ninety-nine times, but the hundredth time served Him with even a little love, God forgot the ninety-nine times he had failed and would say: 'Oh! my devotee served me so well to-day.' But if a man serves another man well ninety-nine times and the hundredth time fails in his service, then man will forget the ninety-nine good services and say: 'That rascal failed to serve me one day.' So Sri Ramakrishna, if there is the least spark of good in any one, sees only that and overlooks all the rest.

"Just by looking at a man he could tell what he was fitted for. If he saw that he was falsely leading a religious life, he would say to him: 'Go and get married.' If he saw that a man was ready to renounce, he would not ask him directly to give up, but he would direct his mind in such a way that the man would of his own accord give up. He used to say that by seeing even one corner of a man's toe, he could make out just what sort of man he was.

"At one time there was a very poor boy who used to come almost daily to Sri Ramakrishna, but the Master would never take any of the food he brought. We did not know why. Finally one day Sri Ramakrishna said: 'This poor fellow comes here because he has a great desire to be rich. Very well, let me taste a little of what he has brought,' and he took a small quantity of the food. The boy's condition began to improve immediately and to-day he is one of the most prosperous men of Calcutta.

"He had the power by a word or a touch to transform the whole life and character. Something went with the word or touch which lent it impelling power. There was a certain young man who came often to Sri Ramakrishna. He was a great devotee, but being the son of a rich man, he had been brought up in luxury and his body was as soft as butter—beautiful to look at, but with no strength or endurance in it.

One day in speaking of him to some one, our Master said : 'He is a good boy and has true devotion, but his body is against him. With that body he cannot do much in this life.' The boy overheard the remark and at once he began a regular course of training, which in two years made his muscles like iron.

"There was another boy who came often to Dakshineswar to see Gurumaharaj. One day he took him into the Temple and touching his heart, gave him a vision of the Divine. Afterwards he explained that the boy would not be able to realize God in this life, but he wished to show him what he would attain in his next birth, that he might be encouraged to struggle for it. I remember once he took the *Karma* of a certain devotee on himself and suffered from a serious bodily disorder for six months."

Swami Ramakrishnananda (Sasi) himself gave this account of his going to Sri Ramakrishna : "I had a desire to see the *Paramahansa* at Dakshineswar because Keshab Chandra Sen had spoken of him in such high terms, so one day I went with fifteen or twenty other boys. I was then reading for F.A. (First Arts) and the others were all preparing for their matriculation. Being the eldest of the band, the conversation was addressed to me.

"I talked a great deal that first day, but never again. After I had listened to Ramakrishna, I had nothing more to say. I did not have to talk. Often I would go to him with my mind full of some doubt which I wished him to clear away ; but when I reached the Temple I would find his room full of people and would feel very much disappointed. As soon as he saw me he would say : 'Come in - sit down. Are you doing well?' Then he would return to his subject, but invariably he would take up the very doubt that was troubling my mind and would clear it away completely.

"He was extremely fond of ice. One day when it was very hot I walked from Calcutta to Dakshineswar (six miles) to carry him a piece of ice wrapped in paper. It was just noontime and the sun's rays were so strong that they blistered my body. When Gurumaharaj saw me, he began to say 'Oh ! Oh !' as if he was in pain. I asked him what was the matter and he said that as he looked at my body, his own began to burn. Strange to say the ice did not melt at all on the way."

Sasi made no compromises in his discipleship. He was devotion embodied. Once at the Temple when he was studying Urdu in order to read the Sufi poets in the original, the

Master called him three times before he heard. When he came Sri Ramakrishna asked what he had been doing and Sasi told him. 'If you forget your duties for the sake of study, you will lose all your devotion,' Sri Ramakrishna remarked quietly. Sasi sensed the deeper significance of his words. He had bigger things to learn. He took his Persian books and threw them into the Ganges.

(To be continued)

INDIAN RENAISSANCE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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The first effect of the Indian Renaissance was felt in our vernacular literatures, which have undergone a complete change and at the same time approximated to one parent standard, namely, English literature. The work of centuries has been crowded into a few decades in this evolution of our modern literatures. My illustrations are all taken from Bengal but my hearers can easily supply parallels from Madras or Bombay.

The first generation of Indians educated in English accepted European literature, philosophy and history—and to a lesser extent science—with enthusiasm and tried to diffuse them among their countrymen by translation, while attempting a little or no original composition of their own. They did not display any literary genius except in manipulating the language for a new need. To this earliest generation belonged Krishna Mohan Banerji (1813-1885), Rajendra Lal Mitra (1821-1892), Peary Chand Mitra (1815-1883) and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1821-1892). They wrote translations, adaptations and epitomes of English works, and did not create any revolution in Bengali thought or style.

A little later came another group of authors, who introduced the new order in its full majesty. They were Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the poet (1824-1873), Dinabandhu Mitra, the dramatist (1830-1874), and Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the novelist (1838-1894)—each of whom reigned supreme over one branch of literature and turned it into a new channel, where it has since flowed at their bidding. Their work has been continued by their successors, notably by Hem Chandra Banerji (1838-1902), Nabih Chandra Sen (1847-1909) and Rabindranath Tagore (born 1862). In their work the influence of English is

unmistakable, but equally unmistakable is their success in adapting the foreign spirit and literary model (and even technique) to the Indian mind and tradition. The best specimens of this new vernacular literature are European in spirit, in outlook, in literary devices, in the choice and treatment of subjects; but they retain a close connection with the best in the literature and life of ancient India. They represent the spirit of England clad in a half oriental garb. There has been no wholesale borrowing, but an assimilation of foreign models, while retaining a surprising amount of originality.

Our vernacular languages have been wonderfully developed and in some cases almost revolutionised by the example of the English style and the needs of the modern world. Our literary language has become both simpler and harder at the same time. It has acquired an unwonted flexibility, variety, and naturalness of movement, while the vocabulary has been greatly amplified. Madhusudan and Vidyasagar, (middle 19th century), greatly modernised the Bengali tongue and made it a proper vehicle for expressing the varied thoughts and feelings of the present day. Both followed the classical style, *i.e.*, they used Sanskrit words by preference and avoided colloquial or homely expressions. But at the same time there is no stiffness, no pedantry, no obscurity in their style, and their genius was shown in combining clearness, sweetness and beauty of expression with strength and purity of diction and a certain music of sound. The Indian drama has been completely transformed since the middle of the 19th century, and is now really a close imitation of the modern European drama. Our greatest divergences from our older literature have been in the departments of the drama and the novel, in which we have been wholesale borrowers from the West. And this has been the case in every Indian vernacular.

The influence of Europe has also enriched our literature by kindling the patriotic spirit and developing our regard for our historic past. This awakened sense of nationality has added a manly and noble element to the Indian literature of our day. Here the Tagores showed the way.

The net result of this literary evolution has been that the best pieces of modern Indian literature do not appear foreign or grotesque to European readers, as they really approximate to the spirit of Europe in plot, in treatment of the subject and in the general characteristics of style.

Then, again, in the 19th century we recovered our long-lost ancient literatures, Vedic and Buddhistic, as well as buried architectural monuments of the Hindu days. The Vedas and

their commentaries had totally disappeared from the plains of Aryavarta (Northern India), where none could interpret them, none had even a manuscript of the text. The English printed this ancient scripture of the Indo-Aryans and brought it to our doors. A similar restoration of the ancient literature of Buddhism to the land of its origin has taken place through the enterprise and scholarship of Europeans. From Nepal, China and Japan Englishmen have sent the lost Buddhistic works to Europe, and Europe has printed them and made them available to us.

SOCIAL REFORM

But the mere study of a foreign or long-lost literature does not constitute a Renaissance. There must be a new birth of the spirit, there must be reforms in society, religion and morals, following the intellectual awakening before we can truly call the movement a Renaissance.

As surely as the Renaissance in Europe was followed by a Reformation, so, in India too a modification of our social relations, our general outlook upon life, our religious doctrines and practices was bound to result from the action of English education on India. Attempts at Hindu social reform began to take shape from 1855, under Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1810-1891) who fought and obtained legal sanction to the marriage of Hindu widows (1856) and tried without success to forbid polygamy. Schools for Hindu girls began to be founded at this time, the Christian missionaries having opened schools for their converts' daughters 30 or 35 years earlier. But social reform received its greatest impetus and spread outside Calcutta to the country districts after the Sepoy Mutiny, under the personal magnetism and organising genius of Keshav Chandra Sen (1838-1884). In addition to spreading female education and widow marriage, he organised temperance associations, night schools, "uplift work" for the lower classes, intercaste marriages, the creation and diffusion of cheap and pure popular literature, famine relief, and many other forms of social service. In Bengal, the most conspicuous followers in the path thus marked out were Shiva Nath Shastri (1847-1919) and Ananda Mohan Bose (1847-1906).

The Renaissance continued unchecked and in full swing for more than one generation crowded with events, and everything old or purely indigenous seemed to go down before it. But the very completeness of its victory led to a reaction in favour of orthodoxy, which was as curious in its nature as it

was grotesque in its garb. At the first flush of the Renaissance, our ardent youths had been drawn to Christianity, because the inner spirit of Hinduism had never been taught to them and they could find nothing but unreason and repulsiveness in the externals of Hinduism as practised in their day. To them the reform of such a religion seemed an impossibility. This explains the conversion to Christianity of K. M. Banerji (1813-1885), Lal Behari De (1826-1894), the father of Miss Toru Dutt and several other highly educated Bengalees of the pre-Mutiny days. Others remained in the fold of Hindu society, but with hardly concealed scepticism about its faith and practices.

Then the Brahmo Samaj, founded in 1828, remained dead or somnolent for twenty-five years, and finally revived by Devendra Nath Tagore (1818-1905), began an active propaganda outside Calcutta under the leadership of young Keshav Chandra Sen about 1860. Its intellectual appeal, refined spirituality and active social service brought many converts to it. The purely philosophical and aristocratic section of the educated Bengalees were attracted to the Adi Brahmo Samaj under Devendra Nath Tagore, the saintly father of Rabindranath.

MODERN HINDU REVIVAL

Thus, Brahmoism rose up to arrest the conversion of educated Hindus to Christianity. But Brahmoism proved only a halting place for the straying Hindus of the new school. Hinduism again asserted its marvellous assimilative power, and changed its colour like the chameleon. Internal reforms were carried out and age-old abuses were removed in Hindu society, silently under the pressure of public opinion on the part of the rapidly increasing educated Hindu population. And then, early in the eighties of the 19th century began the modern Hindu revival. Champions sprang up to defend its philosophy and ritual and proclaim them to the world as the perfection of human thought. An "aggressive" Hinduism replaced the shy retiring creed that used formerly to be ashamed of itself and to stand ever on the defensive against growing foes and a diminishing number of adherents. The conversion even to Brahmoism ceased. The first philosophical exponents of this new or aggressive Hinduism in Bengal were Pandit Sasadhar Tarka-chudamani (1843-1928) and Bankim Chandra Chatterji. The former called science to his aid to prove that Hindu religious practices surcharged the body with electricity from the atmosphere and the earth. It was pseudo-science, no doubt,

but his audience knew no better science. He proved to his own satisfaction and to the exultation of his half-educated audience that the perfect development of a man's mind and body is possible in India only, because here the succession of seasons is so regular, the climate is so free from extremes, the land is so fertile and well-watered. There are, he held, two currents of electricity, one upward and one downward, through the earth, and the tuft of long hair at the back of the orthodox Hindu's head enables him to purify and invigorate his mind by helping the passage of these currents, through the body, for had not his hearers seen a horse-hair brush used for carrying away electricity in laboratory experiments? Therefore, all other religions and civilisations were defective, unscientific and harmful in comparison with Hinduism.

These theories may raise a smile to-day, but their effect was extraordinary. The Pandit had no natural gift of eloquence, his subject was new and not yet popular or familiar. But hundreds of clerks, school masters, compositors and even shop assistants, on the way back from their places of business after a hard day's toil, would cheerfully stop in his lecture hall in the evening and listen spell-bound to Sasadhar for hours. Soon the movement spread to the district towns and everywhere a new Hindu organisation raised its head. Touring preachers completed the work, and one of them, Srikrishna Prasanna Sen, added an emotional appeal and an eloquence which carried everything before them, while Pandit Shiva Chandra Vidyarnava made the deepest impression by his high Sanskrit scholarship, original thinking and refined oratory.

At a still later stage, in the closing decade of the 19th century, even the service of mankind (regardless of caste or creed) ceased to be an exclusive distinction of the Christian and Brahmo churches. At the trumpet call of Swami Vivekananda, the wealth and manhood of Hindu India rose to the need of the day and absorbed this form of moral activity, as more than a thousand years earlier Vaishnavism had absorbed the socialistic features of Mahayan Buddhism. The immense size of Hindu society and the newly acquired facility for making organisation embracing the whole of India, almost completely took the wind out of the sails of the Christian and Brahmo churches, whenever public calamities called for voluntary relief-workers. Miss Margaret Noble, who entered Vivekananda's order under the name of Sister Nivedita, most vigorously and eloquently carried on the intellectual propaganda of this "aggressive Hinduism" and succeeded in kindling among us a new

sense of the aesthetic aspects of Hindu art, Hindu domestic life, Hindu folk tales and Hindu ritual by her wonderful power of sympathy and delicate interpretation.

Earlier than Vivekananda, but in another part of India, Swami Dayananda had started the Arya Samaj, which aimed at taking Hinduism back to what he understood to be the pristine purity of the Vedic age. Opinions will differ as to the spiritual value of his dogmatic creed, and the philological correctness of his translation of the *Rig Veda* (*Satyartha Prakas*), but there cannot be two opinions as to the energy, spirit of progress and philanthropy that he succeeded in infusing among his followers, who now number several hundred thousands and whose devotion to the service of suffering humanity extorts the admiration and emulation even of their opponents.

The latest form of the Hindu revival we owe to Rabindra Nath Tagore. It is a very close but unconscious copy of the movement which began in Russia about 1870—the very language of the Slavonic leaders being repeated by the Indian poet. Its aim is exactly expressed if we replace the words *Russia* and *Russian* by *India* and *Indian* in the following description of the earlier movement as given in the *Cambridge Modern History*:

“Like the Slavophiles, Chernyshevsky wished to preserve the primitive socialism of the village commune; but he looked forward to a Russia which, by a chance of history, should escape the capitalist stage of modern Europe and achieve its development in accordance with the theories of modern socialism.”
 “To the struggle for existence, Mikhailovsky opposes the struggle for individual completeness, which, he says, involves the fullest sense of the world around us” [XII. 296, 302.]

POLITICAL AGITATION

Political agitation by Indians began with academic speeches delivered on a few set occasions by Ram Gopal Ghosh (1815-1868) and the newspaper writings of Girish Chandra Ghosh (1829-1869) and Harish Chandra Mukherji (1824-1861),—all of them being confined to Calcutta and having the most limited audience. Its next expansion was due to Krishna Das Pal (1838-1884) and M. G. Ranade (1842-1901), whose appeal did not go beyond the small educated middle class. At this stage it consisted of the delivery of grave methodical speeches and the presentation of formal petitions to Government. Agitation became a living force for the first time during Lord Lytton's viceroyalty (1876), thanks to the efforts of Sisir Kumar Ghosh (1842-1911) and his brothers, who founded the “Amrita Bazar

Patrika," as a democratic rival to the staid and aristocratic "Hindoo Patriot" of Krishna Das Pal. The formal orderly upper class school of politicians attained to their supreme of achievement in the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1887. Their aims and methods were still far from democratic, and it was almost inevitable that they should be devoured by their children,—the middle class democrats, at the Surat Congress of 1907. But even then politics was still far from having been brought to the doors of the common people. That consummation was left to the period following the Great War and the initiative of Mahatma Gandhi. An appeal to the heart of the real *people* of India is no longer an impossibility, though their opinion cannot be made to crytallise on a purely political issue, because of their total lack of political knowledge and experience and dispersion among many provinces and castes.

The question will be naturally asked—What has been the fruit of this long course of political agitation by the Indians and of the gradual liberalisation of the constitution by Government? When the dust of contemporary controversy is laid, when the din of our daily papers has passed into silence and oblivion, it will then be found that a nation has begun to be formed in India. The people have not gained liberty, but they are now on the way to attaining that equality which is the indispensable preliminary to political liberty. The people have begun to be slowly standardised all over India. A steady advance is being made by the silent and irresistible force of the time-spirit and the insistent example of European society, to free us from the mediæval distinctions of status and convention, of locality and caste.

The French revolutionists fought and bled for liberty, equality and fraternity. In the end, they gained neither the first nor the third, but only the second, and that enabled them to win liberty seventy years afterwards, under the Third Republic, because there cannot be political liberty without social equality and the standardisation of the people in the externals of life, in intellectual processes, and in outlook upon the world.

A people with watertight class or caste distinctions, even when freed from foreign domination, cannot enjoy political liberty; it will be subject to the autocracy of a clique or a family. The *sine qua non* of democracy is absolute social equality, equal rights not only before the law, but also in society, equal opportunities for all in life, and the reward of merit irrespective of birth, not only by the State but also by public opinion.

We already see the faint dawning of such a sense of oneness among all the Indian people. The victory of a Bengali football team over a British regiment at Simla now causes Punjabi spectators to rejoice. The sufferings of Tamil emigrants in South Africa or Fiji are keenly resented in Calcutta and Poona. There is a monotonous sameness in the agenda paper and procedure of an orthodox Hindu caste conference and, say, an All-India Muslim Educational Conference.

ECONOMIC AND MILITARY DECLINE

This survey of India in the modern age would be incomplete and misleading, if we do not notice two points of vital importance in which we have lost ground in comparison with the Mughal age. If we do not modernise ourselves and become capable of competing with the outer world to the fullest extent in these two respects, we are a doomed race.

Ever since the middle of the 19th century, Europe has been so rapidly and steadily advancing by the application of science to arms and to the industrial arts that India is to-day much less able than in the age of Akbar to wage an economic or military contest with Europe. We are to-day helpless in production and exchange and the economic drain will dry the country to death if we do not modernise our industry, arts, transport and banking. In warfare, India, standing by itself without any aid or leadership from Europe is unfit to face a modern army even for an hour. No nation can exist by merely employing its brain, without developing its economic resources and military organisations.

OUR FUTURE

This survey of our country's history leads irresistibly to the conclusion that we must embrace the spirit of progress with a full and unquestioning faith, we must face the unpopularity of resisting the seductive cry for going back to the undiluted wisdom of our ancestors, we must avoid eternally emphasizing the peculiar heritage of the Aryan India of the far-off past. We must recognise that in the course of her evolution India has absorbed many new elements later than the Vedic Aryan age and even than the Mughal age. We must not forget that the modern Indian civilisation is a composite daily-growing product and not a mummy preserved in dry sand for four thousand years. To India the message of the Time-spirit is :—

"Give up your dream of isolation, standardize and come into line with the moving world outside or you will become

extinct as a race through the operation of relentless economic competition in a world which has now become as one country.”*

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE CONCORD COLONY

It was constantly in Swami's mind to make the Shanti Ashrama self-supporting, but he also had in mind a much larger idea, and that was a colony on a tract of land in some beautiful and fertile spot where members of the Society might support themselves in peace and comfort on their own individual plots of land. A portion of the land was to belong to the Society, the returns from which would help to enlarge and spread the work at the Temple. The cultivation of the land and participation in the various industries incident thereto would also give employment in a spiritual cause to a number of the workers in the Society.

It so happened that a large tract of land had been set out in young walnut trees and the lessees, hearing that Swami was interested in establishing a colony, came to see him making special purchase prices. They took Swami to see the land, which was on the outskirts of the little town of Concord, only one and one-half hours' travel from San Francisco.

Swami found the tract located in the fertile Moraga Valley, close to the base of Mt. Diablo, one of the highest mountains in that region. The climate was very healthful and plenty of water could be obtained from wells. Swami felt much pleased with the land, the climate and the delightful surroundings, and organized several parties of the members to look at the land, so that they could intelligently give their opinions. The members who saw the land were unanimous in its favour, and on their favourable opinion Swami entered into the necessary arrangements for purchase. The number of acres purchased was 200, of which 25 acres were reserved for the support of the Society, and the balance distributed among those members who wished to settle in the colony.

* The last in a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

A suitable building was put up on the Society's section in which to house the young men who were to work on the land. This house also served as Swami's headquarters during his weekly visits and here all the colony business was transacted and spiritual classes were held on Saturday evenings by Swami. There were various buildings for animals already on the Society land, also a good well.

One by one the members moved in, built houses, sunk wells, planted orchards and started crops, and it was not long before the colony was well under way. The horses were housed in stables on the Society land and drawn upon by the members as needed. It was Swami's hope that this might be a place to which members would be able to retire and live comfortably in their old age.

Swami resolved to make this a real center of Vedanta activities and to that end planned for a Temple with a library attached, one to be fully representative of the Vedanta philosophy, a treasure house of the Vedanta literature in America. His plans also included a home for orphan children, a home for aged devotees who were in want or unable to care for themselves, and a hospital for those who were ill. The hospital was to be both indoors and outdoors, so that patients might have a full chance of recovery in the pleasant surroundings, beautiful scenery and climate.

With Swami the purpose to do a thing was synonymous with the act and the means to do it with were never lacking. Most truly of him was the proverb written :

"On him who saves even the fraction of a cowrie shell, yet, when occasion requires it, spends large sums royally like a king, on him the Goddess of Fortune pours her blessings."

Always economical in small matters, Swami never hesitated in the expenditure of large sums, once his judgment was made, and always the money came as the crisis approached. While he was pondering over the raising of funds for the addition of the third story to the Temple in San Francisco, in anticipation of the coming of Swami Brahmananda, the front door bell rang and an old member, bent and crippled with age, but full of devotion to the cause and love for Swami, appeared, assisted by a friend, bearing a handsatchel with \$8,000 in gold to be applied to the building of the addition.

At another time, his funds exhausted, a bill for \$1,000 was coming due the next day and there was no money on hand to meet it. That very evening a member came with nearly the

full amount as a gift and the remainder Swami was able to secure the next morning, enabling him to pay the bill in full.

It was the same at the Concord Colony—money always came as it was needed. Wells were sunk, orchards and crops were planted and gradually the tract assumed all the appearance of a thriving colony. Because he had no thought of using them for himself, Lakshmi literally showered Swami with her gifts. Was it not the Divine Mother's work that was being done?—therefore the Goddess gave gladly.

In addition to his duties at the Temple, Swami went to the colony once every week to supervise the various business matters arising and to visit the different members to see how their affairs were prospering.

Improvements continued and all the earlier plans seemed destined to fulfilment when, in January, 1915, there came the shock of Swami's untimely end. Without the inspiration of Swami's presence, interest lagged and during the next two years, one by one the colonists began to leave; a number sold their places and finally the Society trustees saw that it was best to dispose of the Society property, as there was no one in the Society with the time or means to take Swami's place in carrying on the work.

So the colony at Concord came to an end, but not without results, for all who participated in the activities there received great blessings, and look back on those years as among the happiest and most blessed in their lives.

THE HINDU AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

By S. T.

(Continued from the last issue)

The Westerner looks skeptical, and wants to know how it is done. How is this superlative state of bliss and knowledge to be realized? By the purification of the mind and heart of the sense of egoism and the will to separate life. You cannot hold on to the small separate existence, and expect to know the joys of the Infinite, at one and the same time. Hence the great word of the Hindu religion—Renunciation: non-attachment, non-desire for the people and things of the relative world. The exact opposite of the Mental Scientist's "attracting to himself" a succession of experiences and things he craves—is the Hindu idea of turning from, giving up individual experi-

ence altogether. Burn out all egoistic desire, "fry the seeds," so that there shall be no fine causes left to create new bodies and perpetuate fresh Karma. Free the soul from the bondages of phenomenal existence, to the realization of its own true nature. The process by which this salvation of the Hindus is effected, is called Yoga.

Most Western people think that Yoga means breathing exercises, which lead to miraculous psychic powers. Yoga literally means "*union*"—the union between the individual spirit and the Supreme Spirit, and the purification of the mind of the sense of egoism, in order that this union may take place. Breathing exercises, postures, meditations, are some of the means by which that purification is accomplished, and all the life-currents set flowing rhythmically in one direction.

A great deal of cheap sensationalism is current in this country with regard to Yoga, thanks to pseudoyogis and charlatans seeking to capitalize their "occult" powers. One very easy way to recognize a genuine yogi is by the fact that he would never advertise or give lessons for money; he would accept a *gift* of money, food or clothing—for teacher as well as disciple must live, and surely he is giving something worth his support. But it would be a modest gift, and never would he ask or advertise.

There is nothing spooky or mysterious about Yoga. It is a straightforward science with certain specific rules. An atheist, if he follows the rules, will reach the goal as surely as the most ardent devotee. There are various Yogas, or paths to the Supreme, suited to different temperaments. In the *Jnana-Yoga* of Knowledge and Discrimination, the man of philosophical temperament tries to expand his subjective consciousness to include the whole of the objective world; and thus eliminate the vision of the dual, or relative, life. In the *Bhakti-Yoga* of Devotion, the man who worships the Personal God seeks to merge his individual being in the being of his Lord. In the *Karma-Yoga* of Selfless Action, the practical man in the thick of worldly affairs, seeks to rid himself of egoism by dedicating all the fruits of his labors to the Supreme Being, and by seeing all people and things as so many modes of that same Being. By this practice, gradually his vision is cleared, light flashes, and he comes into the bliss and illumination of the super-conscious state, like the other yogis.

But the Yoga usually referred to in speaking of the spiritual science of the Hindus, is the *Raja* (Royal) *Yoga* of Concentration. This marvelous system of psychological analysis and

training—of which modern systems seem crude echoes, and to which most of them have paid admiring tribute—was founded by a Hindu sage named Patanjali, in 1400 B.C. Its aim is to lead the aspirant to the super-conscious or God state, through concentration of the mind and control over all natural powers. At present we are slaves to Nature. To manifest our divinity, we must have absolute control over Nature, both external and internal.

At present we do not control the body. We must get control of it. Every action now an automatic or reflex action, was once a conscious action. Instinct is repeated habit—experience becomes subconscious. Nobody is manufacturing the body but ourselves: but our action has become automatic and degenerate. We must get control of these reflex acts, arrange and alter the molecules of our bodies to suit ourselves. A Yogi need not be sick, or leave his body for the experience of another world, unless and until he pleases. Men are now living, the Hindus declare, whose age according to our calendar runs into hundreds of years.

We must have absolute control of the body. We must have absolute control of the mind. The mind is always in some sort of disturbance. Anything that comes along—any outside object, any slightest word that is said to us, any memory floating up from the past—can throw the mind into agitation, even positive passion; and in a moment all our high aims and intents are put to rout. How can the Soul, the Highest, be perceived, when all these blurring mind-waves are continually obstructing our true vision?

To control these waves, we must control their fine causes—the fine memories and impressions buried deep down in their subterranean labyrinth. Patanjali, thirty-five hundred years ago, worked out a system of analysis and control of the subconscious, beside which modern psychoanalysis looks like a child's primer. Its strength is in its linking of the spiritual, mental and emotional natures. Modern psychoanalysis gives mental training without high spiritual aspiration. It cleanses, but does not inspire. It gives no driving motive, other than the well-being of the social group. Most religions, on the other hand, furnish plenty of inspiration and emotional drive, but have no psychological technique for wisely guiding or using the emotional force they rouse. They have one or two blanket formulas which they urge indiscriminately on individuals.

"Be good" say all the religions. "Be social" says modern psychology. But why? What I want, is to be happy. And

how?—when there are all these instincts stronger than I am, clamoring for satisfaction. Yoga links man's strongest desire (for greatest possible happiness) with his highest religious aspiration (for God, the supreme state of consciousness), and then furnishes him with a practical system of mental and spiritual training, by which to achieve the two in one.

Through Patanjali's system a man gets control of the body, control of the mind, control of the outside universe. When we have knowledge of a thing, *full* knowledge of it, we have control over it. By concentration, prolonged meditation on any object, we can get knowledge of and control over that object. When all the rays of the mind are focused, we see that object in full light.

Thus we are told that by concentration on the strength of the elephant, the yogi gets the strength of the elephant. By meditation on the elements, he gets knowledge of the elements. Meditation on the sun, gives knowledge of the world ; meditation on the moon, knowledge of the cluster of the stars ; on the pole star, knowledge of the motion of the stars ; on the navel circle, knowledge of the constitution of the body ; on the well of the throat, cessation from hunger.

"By conquering the nerve current that governs the lungs, he becomes light—does not sink in water, can walk on thorns, sword blades, stand in fire." Thus are explained many of the miraculous facts seen by travelers in the East, and also some of the Bible miracles of one whom the Hindus consider a very great yogi—Jesus Christ.

Extraordinary powers do come with the pursuit of this science of Yoga—knowledge of past lives, knowledge of another's mind, long-distance hearing, ability to vanish from sight, and so on. But the object is not to attain these powers, but the God-consciousness that rejects all personal power ; and one test along the way of attainment is the ability both to acquire, and to give up, these intermediary psychic faculties. They do not free, but rather bind the individual further ; for they intensify both happiness and suffering, and feed the egoism he is trying to get rid of. They are lesser gifts, to be renounced for the pearl of great price.

This is not to be obtained by a few weeks or months of "intensive training," or a course of lessons for twenty-five dollars. Long and patient years are necessary—years of complete isolation, of absolute consecration as well as concentration ; years of silence, simplicity, singleness of heart ; and a teacher in whom the disciple has absolute trust, and whom he

is ready to follow unquestioningly. For in the Hindu religion, it will not suffice for the teacher to *talk* about truth. He has to be it. He must himself have attained and know to its last and subtlest detail, every step of the path he engages to unfold to the disciple. "Wonderful must be the teacher, and wonderful the taught," says the Hindu Scripture.

When this is the case, when the pupil is devoted and faithful, and the teacher wise with a great wisdom, finally—after many weary struggles, failures, victories and unremitting discipline—the goal is reached. Egoism burned away, the mind now made pure as the Soul itself, reflects Reality; the great illumination comes, and the pure in heart "sees God." The Hindu is not content to discuss God, or hear sermons about God, or to pray to God when he is frightened, or some loved one is ill. If there is a God, the Hindu is going to reach Him, and see Him, and know Him; and this he can only do by entering into and becoming God himself. "Becoming perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect."

It can be done. The Yogi does it. Not by following some dogma or doctrine, not by sitting passive under the preaching of some other man; but by his own unremitting practice on his own mental and physical and spiritual imperfections—till he transforms a cloudy, obstructive, impure and unruly instrument into a clear and perfect reflector of the Perfect One he wants to be and to know. No one who has come in contact with such a man can ever forget him.

But if these men have experienced the highest state of consciousness and have this extraordinary power and wisdom, why have they not applied it more effectively to the problems of their country? If this religion and philosophy is so remarkable, why is it not practically apparent? With such enlightened seers as guides and spiritual directors, how can there be such things as child marriage, such treatment of women and outcasts, such a generally backward, and it seems to us in many ways even degraded social system?

This is the question constantly asked, and reasonably and rightly asked, by Western people. And it remains to be answered. It is a question the more significant in that India is the one country in the world where society has been deliberately organized in accordance with the religious ideal; and has proceeded in accordance with that ideal—of spiritual realization rather than material acquisition—for more than forty centuries. Why then does it not present a more inspiring picture?

Indians blame many of their humiliating conditions on their overlords, and the fact that at present they are a conquered people. They say that in ancient times—when caste was mobile, and simply intended to define the duties and privileges of the four natural divisions of mankind—they had a high type of society ; but that it degenerated through the assumption of too much power by the Brahman or priest caste and through the invasion of enemies when they were not united to defend themselves. It was also due to these invaders that they were obliged to sequester their women. Against the evils of child marriage, they set the Western evil of prostitution—which the Indian early marriage was designed to avoid. Against their aristocratic ideal that the best, and not the lower class shall dominate, they set our present “democratic” domination by immigrant labor and unscrupulous politicians.

They point to our slums, our hold-ups, our murders and general crime records, our drug and bootlegging scandals, our lynchings and our exploitation of dark races—in our *Christian* civilization—“And you wax indignant,” they dryly ask, “about *our* social abuses ”

They say we do not understand their society and their ideals, especially their ideal about women, and therefore misjudge and misinterpret them. They are equally shocked by many of our ideas and social institutions.

Allowing for all this—and certainly Indians have had to endure from outside a great deal that to a proud and ancient race must be almost unendurable—I still believe that their real problem, as with all of us, is in themselves ; and that their social apathy results from the very ideals that have constituted their spiritual greatness.

If you believe that there is no happiness or possible good in finite life, you do not work with any great enthusiasm to bring about such good and happiness. If you believe that salvation is a matter of each individual's getting rid of his own delusion by his own self, you do not concern yourself overmuch with the salvation of your brother. If you believe that four thousand years ago your inspired countrymen established the most perfect possible social system, you will not work to obtain a better system—rather you will resist the idea that any improvement can be found. Fixity—finality—satisfaction with the old and already established—a supreme and immovable conservatism : this is the real answer to the Hindu social problem.

Social conservatism, spiritual individualism, and the ideal of renunciation of the relative life. This life in the world,

this "Maya," is delusion and misery. Do not waste energy trying to improve it. Get rid of your individual dream concerning it, and be free.

Here is the great division between Eastern and Western thought. The idea of progress—the idea of the Eternal Flux. Individual existence is inevitably a burden—individual existence is potentially ideal, is to be made ideal. Improvement of relative life—abandonment of relative life.

What does, the Hindus ask, all your finite fussing and striving amount to? Does the millennium for which you are ingenuously toiling ever come any nearer? After thousands of years spent in elaborating your "civilized" machinery—with your complex political, social and economic systems of to-day—are you any nearer happiness than was the savage you evolved from? Your "progress" has been simply the multiplication of wants, and the increasing strain to satisfy them. Your "emancipation" of women has emancipated them only from the burdens of the home to the far greater burdens of commercial competition—which is destroying in them the only beauty and tenderness left in the world, ruining children and breaking up the family. Your democracy and freeing of *your* lower classes has brought you under the domination of a mass-mind culture, so that in your government, your art, and throughout your society, the voice of the least wise prevails by sheer weight of numbers. You have not moved on or up, you have simply kept moving. This is all that "progress" ever is, or does.

Is this true? Are we, all of us in the Western world, laboring under a gigantic illusion? Is there no possible advance or betterment in this life of ours? Are we fools to try? Has nothing happened throughout all these painful centuries but the continual piling up and tearing down of a child's house of blocks?

The answer is, would we go back—to the state of the savage, or of the feudal lord, or the pilgrim fathers, or to any state that is past? I have never met a person who would. When people talk of going back to the "good old days," they think of going back to the *advantages* of that former state; but they always go, in imagination, with the mental equipment and at least some of the advantages of their present condition.

For there are advantages. Through all the changing and experiencing and elaborating, something has happened. And that something that makes everything worth while to us, that

makes us declare to a man that we would not go back, is—oddly enough—precisely the same thing for which the Hindus are striving: *expansion into a wider consciousness*. We are conscious of including more, much more, within our boundaries of life and possibility, than the savage or the pilgrim fathers—or even the people of the nineteenth century. We vastly prefer the contacts, the richness of association of our present day. We have finer instruments, more responsive material, control over more subtle forces—and so a wider range of experience. Electricity is better than gas or steam, wireless than cables or telephones, round the world intercourse better than round the tepee or the town.

It is this progressive expansion that has made all the suffering and striving worth while—and that is the meaning of life, for race and individuals. *Progressive* expansion: this is reality for us, as truly as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindu. A gradual advance toward an ultimate perfection—or at any rate an ultimately satisfactory state. We believe in this, we are united as a social body to accomplish it; our interest, our faith, all our effort and our hope is centered and staked on it. Is this great urge and instinct of so large a portion of mankind simply a delusion—a trick of nature? Is it never to be realized? Are we merely squirrels running round and round our cage-wheel? I do not believe it.

The Hindu says, your only happiness is in union with God. But in this practical life, our good has come through union with each other—a union that began with the first rude compact of the primitive clan, and has advanced to the amazingly complex union of modern international association. Notwithstanding all the wars and fighting and trickery that still “hang over” from the animal world into our human life of mixed and contradictory activities, there yet has been a steady forward move toward this sort of Oneness—a movement that is to-day gaining tremendously in strength and determination. And the time must come, according to the Hindus’ own theory, when in the cycle of our spiritual and social evolution, the tendency to oneness overbalances and outstrips the tendency to separate fighting. Even now, our *natural* relation with one another is affection and union. No one knows how relative life would appear if these two were allowed to predominate.

I believe that East and West are approaching the same goal by different avenues. The East seeks to realize perfection by withdrawal from the distractions of the group, and imme-

diate individual liberation into the desired state of consciousness. The West seeks the gradual raising of consciousness for the whole race, and individuals are content to be held back until the whole group can come up into realization. Oneness together in working for perfection for all—"thy kingdom come *on earth*"—is the aspiration of the modern Westerner.

In the intelligent accomplishment of this great aim, we can be vastly helped by the psychological and spiritual science of the Hindus. They are the natural spiritual teachers of the universe; and, I believe, have developed and cherished this subtle science of theirs through the ages—at the expense of other sides of life—to give it to us all now, in the day of the world's great spiritual crisis. Their penetrating insight, their clear and brilliant minds—minds trained in the philosophy of Bradley and Bergson as thoroughly as in their own, and at home in every religion—their superb logic, their uncompromising love of truth unobscured by passion for organization or dogma, their tolerance and sympathy with every form of belief, their sensitive searching for the right path for each individual, above all their understanding of the furthest deeps of the human spirit: these things naturally fit them to be spiritual guides and teachers.

But to help effectively, they need to place a different emphasis in their religion. Not Renunciation, but Expansion of life is the ideal that will appeal to the modern. The Hindu, and all religions, put the emphasis renouncing this world on self-denial, self-sacrifice, renunciation. That is why religion has not captured the modern man. It goes against, rather than with, his profound instinct for self-expansion, and for joy in this life rather than scorn and condemnation of it.

The modern wants a *positive* religious ideal. He wants goodness not crucified, but triumphant. He wants to see goodness capture and conquer and sweep men off their feet, by its sheer radiant power and attraction. He wants not a Man of Sorrows weighed down with the sufferings of the world, nor a man of meditation who turns his back on them; but a man of inspiration who will point a practical and possible, an irresistible way out of those sufferings, and who will catch us up in the fire of his enthusiasm and bear us along with him to accomplishment.

Thousands of years ago—many, many years before Christ or Buddha or Mohammed—in the stillness of those forests where science and spirituality had their twin birth, a sentence was uttered that strikes straight to the heart of the man of

to-day. It was not "renounce"; it was not "deny thyself, forsake the world, take up thy cross and follow me." No. It was this simple statement: "*Happiness is in things that are great.*"

Great things to live and work for!—and the "little self" will be dropped off naturally, inevitably; like the body, when conditions are normal, simply not thought about at all. Not a forced and conscious renunciation, but a natural and spontaneous letting go, as something more interesting claims the attention.

There are powers in man awaiting unfoldment as incredible to most people of to-day as the power to fly or to talk over the air was incredible to their grandparents. There are spheres of life awaiting our investigation, so exciting that the excitements of the little things at which we work so hard for a happiness that ever eludes—fade away like nursery soap-bubbles. Not the denunciation of those lesser things, but the opening up of the big ones and the making of them attractive, is the method to be followed with the spiritually young. And all ages and races can write under the banner of that long ago sage:

"Happiness is in things that are great."

(Concluded.)

REVIEW

OUTLINE OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CIVILISATION.

—By Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D. To be had of Chatterjee & Co., 15, College Square, Calcutta. 628 pp. Price Rs. 7/8/-, foreign 12s. 6d.

The book presents, within a small compass, a connected and comprehensive view of Indian life in its various aspects, e.g. political, social, religious, literary, aesthetic and economic, from the earliest times to the Muhammadan conquest. Side-light has as well been thrown on such phases of it as domestic and civic conditions, judicial system, maritime activities and foreign relations. The account, given mainly from the Arthashastra of Kautilya and Sukraniti, of the municipal administration of Maurya capital, the democratic constitution of the Licchavis, the organisation of trade and commerce resulting in balanced distribution of wealth, and of the general character and systematic working of government, is interesting and illuminating.

The whole fabric, which is woven out of materials carefully sifted from previous writings and the results of latest discoveries, has been embellished with the author's own views characterised by the modera-

tion and the acumen of a critic. Some of the hitherto accepted hypotheses have been discussed and supported or refuted on fuller evidences and cogent arguments. In this respect the present work is a distinct advance on its predecessors. The author's remarks on Alexander's invasion, the democratic character of old monarchy, the gradual development of Indian art and the slow progress of Arab domination are forceful and, in certain cases, bold. Some of his reflections, however, as for instance, those on the presumptions supremacy of the Brahmans, though apt in many respects, and on the Aryan missionaries paving the way for military conquest, may be said to be only plausible. One fine feature of the book is constant reference to old inscriptions, coins, literary works account of foreigners and modern researches from which the materials have been largely drawn. On the whole, it is an accurate and coherent picture of the good old days of India with such play of light and shade as make us justly proud of the glorious achievements of our forefathers and profitably aware of their foibles and failures.

The entire panorama has been surveyed under three distinct epochs of cultural development :

- (1) Vedic culture—from the earliest times to c. 600 B.C.
- (2) Buddhism and Jainism—from c. 600 B.C. to c. 300 A.D.
- (3) Neo-Brahmanism—from c. 300 A.D. to 1200 A.D.

The epics which form the subject-matter of the second period have been relegated to a much later date than is generally assigned to them. The author's notice of the philosophical systems of the Hindus is deplorably too short compared with his treatment of other literary products.

The book is written in a lucid style. The author has appended to it, not without much labour, sufficient bibliographical and critical notes as a help for advanced studies on different branches of the subject. The work is suited not only to the requirements of general readers, but the I.A. and B.A. students of our universities will also find it of considerable use and value. It would have been very nice if some historical maps were added by way of illustration. The printing and get-up is good.

FOURTEEN EXPERIMENTS IN RURAL EDUCATION.—By Various Writers. Association Press (Y. M. C. A.), 5, Russell Street, Calcutta. XV+127 pp. Price Re. 1-4.

A short notice can scarcely do justice to the interesting materials contained in the booklet. Christian Missionaries, like many other agencies in India, in response to the growing need of a reorientation of the educational methods and policies in India and in order to make education more real and vocational, have started various educational ventures in different parts of India. The results of those experiments have been nicely described in the book under review, often with pictorial illustrations.

There cannot be the least doubt that the extreme unemployment which has brought the economic life of India on the verge of collapse,

cannot be properly fought unless rural education with a predominance of vocational training is widely spread all over India. Thinking minds everywhere are seriously dwelling on the problem. The present booklet is calculated to be of great help to them as well as to the general reading public.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Sharvananda in Mysore

After a period of incessant activity at Delhi, Swami Sharvananda spent the last summer in the Mysore State. At Bangalore the Swami delivered lectures on "Man and the Universe," "The Soul of Hindu Culture" and "Ancient Religion and Modern Science." At Nandi Hills he spoke on "Science and Religion." From there the Swami went to the Mysore city where he gave as many as eighteen discourses on the Gita and delivered a lecture on "The Making of New India." On Sunday, the 8th July, the Swami was invited by Mr. Shuistry, Professor of Persian and Arabic in the Maharaja's College, to give an address in Urdu at the Shia Mosque. The Swami's subject was "Islam and Vedanta." Many pious Mussalmans attended and also many Hindus. The Professor introduced the Swami with kind words of appreciation of the work of the R. K. Order. The Swami in course of his speech said that the misunderstanding between the two great religions in India, Hinduism and Islam, was due to a lack of understanding of each other's scriptures and culture. In fact, both Islam and Hinduism spoke of the unity of Godhead and resignation to the will of God. He illustrated his points with quotations from the Koran and the Vedas. He explained and commented on the spiritual experiences of the Sufi saints and Vedic seers. Next he gave a true explanation of image-worship which is said to be the main difference between Hinduism and Islam and said that the Hindu does not worship actually the idol but the ideal which the image symbolises. Prof. Shuistry thanked the Swami and appreciated his interpretations very much. He fully agreed with the Swami in his interpretation of image-worship. He then garlanded the Swami amidst loud applause of the Muslim and Hindu audience. When the audience dispersed, many venerable Mussalmans approached the Swami and personally thanked him for his words of good-will and peace and repeatedly requested him to come often to their mosque and give them opportunities to understand their Hindu brothers.

The Swami's presence at Mysore was taken advantage of by the local Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama to organise an influential committee to collect funds for building the Ashrama on the site granted by the City Improvement Trust Board in Vani Vilas Mahalla.

R. K. Ashrama, Cawnpore

The latest report of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Cawnpore, (for the years 1926 and 1927) is a record of many useful activities. The following

are some of them : (1) daily distribution of medicines free to the poor, with a daily average attendance of 150; (2) outdoor help to men and women of poor respectable families; (3) relief work in time of famine, flood, etc.; (4) free elementary education to the depressed classes in three schools; (5) a students' home where 8 students live free, 4 of them being college students; (6) a public gymnasium with 60 members; (7) daily and weekly religious classes; and (8) library and reading room.

All these works require to be developed considerably, which is however not possible unless the public come forward with generous financial help. The Cawnpore Ashrama has been doing splendid work; and we earnestly appeal to our readers to do it all help they can. Contributions may be sent to *Secretary, Sri R. K. Ashrama, Cawnpore, U. P.*

Centre of the R. K. Mission at Singapore

A Branch Centre of the Mission has been opened at Singapore in July last. In 1913 and 1919 Swami Sharvananda, then President of the Mission Centre at Madras was invited by the local Hindus. The Swami's visits were so inspiring and impressive that during his second visit in 1919 the Members of Arya Sangham—a local society working on similar lines as the Mission—resolved to hand over to the Mission all its properties, so that a centre of the Mission could be opened. The authorities of the Mission accepted the gift and expressed that a branch centre shall be gradually opened at Singapore. Since Swami Sharvananda's visit in 1919, Swamis Abhedananda, Paramananda and others of the Mission passed through this beautiful metropolis of the Eastern Seas and lectured on the Ideas and Ideals of the Mission. In May last, Swami Adyananda was instructed by the Governing Body of the Mission to open the branch centre and take charge of it. Accordingly Swami Adyananda came down to Singapore from Kuala Lumpur and opened the centre. Several lectures have been delivered by Swami Adyananda on the Ideas and Ideals of the Mission.

The Subjects of Swamiji's Lecture were :—

- (1) Sri Ramkrishna and His Mission
- (2) Heart of Hindrism
- (3) The Plan and Purpose of Human Evolution
- (4) The Philosophy of Good and Evil
- (5) The Message of the Bhagavat Gita
- (6) What is Vedanta

The Swami is at present conducting an Evening Service on every Sunday at the Mission House when the following programme is followed :

- (1) Invocation and Chanting
- (2) Music
- (3) Preaching through Lectures and Discourses, or Study Class on the Bhagavat Gita or Upanishads.

The attendance at all these lectures and classes has been large. About 120 members have upto now joined the Mission and it is hoped, membership will soon be increased. An Advisory Committee to assist

the Swami has also been formed. The leading Hindus have agreed to serve there. The Mission has already obtained a plot of land from the late Arya Sangham and appeals will soon be made to collect funds to put up the Mission House. The other lines of activities will also be opened gradually.

Balurghat and Bankura Famine Relief.

The Secretary R. K. Mission writes :—

We have received detailed news of acute distress in Balurghat. The chief product of the place is paddy which grows only once a year. Owing to the repeated paucity of rain during the last three years, paddy did not grow well as it was expected. Particularly last year, the harvest was very bad. The people had to maintain themselves by mortgaging or selling almost all they had in their possession. As the paddy failed there was scarcity of straw without which it was next to impossible to thatch their roofs and maintain their cattle. So the sufferers sold their cattle some of which died of starvation. Houses without straw became unfit for habitation. During the sowing season they did not know how they would carry on their cultivation without money. At that time somehow they were able to sow seeds with the help of Government Agricultural Loans. They have, at present, to live on insufficient foods and even to go without any meal for days together. Some of the sufferers deserted their villages lest they should witness the death of their starving children. So long our work was going on from only one centre. But as there is an urgent demand for further work, we are thinking of extending our activities. The public fully know that we are greatly handicapped in our present work for want of funds. So our earnest appeal goes to all to help us with their kind contributions for continuing our activities.

It is now five months since we started relief work in Bankura. At present, we are distributing rice and clothes from four centres. About 2,000 recipients are getting weekly doles of rice amounting to nearly 93 maunds in 126 villages. The total amount of rice distributed upto now in Bankura and Balurghat is about 1,401 maunds. And nearly 1,300 pieces of new cloths besides old ones have also been distributed among the needy persons.

All contributions, however small, in cash or kind, may be sent to any of the following addresses and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Treasurer of the Ramkrishna Mission.

1. President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah.
 2. Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
 3. Manager, Advaita Ashram, 182A, Muktaram Babu St., Calcutta.
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Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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NO. 11.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

III

(To a Madras Disciple)

HYDERABAD,

The 21st Feb., 1893.

Your friend the young graduate came to receive me at the station, so also a Bengali gentleman. At present I am living with the Bengali gentleman ; to-morrow I go to live with your young friend for a few days, and then I see the different sights here, and in a few days you may expect me at Madras. For I am very sorry to tell you that I cannot go back at present to Rajputana. It is so very dreadfully hot here already. I do not know how hot it would be at Rajputana and I cannot bear heat at all. So the next thing I would do would be to go back to Bangalore and then to Ootacamund to pass the summer there. My brain boils in heat.

So all my plans have been dashed to the ground. That is why I wanted to hurry off from Madras early. In that case I would have left months in my hands to seek out for somebody to send me over to America amongst our northern princes.

But alas, it is now too late. First, I cannot wander about in this heat,—I would die. Secondly, my fast friends in Rajputana would keep me bound down to their sides if they get hold of me and would not let me go over to Europe. So my plan was to get hold of some new person without my friends' knowledge. But this delay at Madras has dashed all my hopes to the ground, and with a deep sigh I give it up and the Lord's will be done! However, you may be almost sure that I shall see you in a few days for a day or two in Madras and then go to Bangalore and thence to Ootacamund to see "if" the M—— Maharajah sends me up. "If"—because you see I cannot be sure of any promise of a D—— Raja. They are not Rajputs. A Rajput would rather die than break his promise. However, man learns as he lives and experience is the greatest teacher in the world.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for Thine is the glory and the kingdom for ever and ever." My compliments to you all.

Yours etc.;

SACCHIDANANDA.*

AS WE KNOW HER

BY THE EDITOR

(Continued from the last issue)

The invasion of India by the West not only disorganised India's economic system, but had also its repercussion on her social system. It could not be otherwise. For the social and economic systems are interrelated in every country. We have often dealt with the socio-economic implications of the caste system. The present idea of the caste system, mostly held by Westerners and their apt Indian disciples, is extremely crude and meaningless. It is generally represented as a machine of tyranny invented by the upper classes, and especially the Brahmins, to perpetuate their authority on the masses. Nothing can be more erroneous than this. Any serious student of Indian history will find that caste has always been very mobile. Brahmins have often been made out of lower castes. Tyranny no doubt there has been. But as to that,

* Swamiji used to call himself such in those days.

what social system has ever been able to eliminate the exploitation of one class by another? Human nature will remain the same under all systems and we are yet to know of a system which is invulnerable to the wickednesses of human nature.

The caste system was originated with the best of intentions. It has served wonderfully the manifold purpose for which it came into being. And even now it has not lost its utility. Caste divisions were necessary for several reasons. Wherever necessities of life are locally produced, elimination of undue competition becomes necessary. This leads to divisions of labour. This in its turn leads to economic caste system. But such divisions become urgent when many races with varied grades of culture and traditions become incorporated into a single society. When that society has the goodness and sanity to recognise that the different races in whatever degrees of evolution, represent really new and invaluable aspects of humanity, without which humanity will be a poor uniformity, caste system tending to conserve the specialities of the constituent races becomes still urgently necessary. But its necessity becomes almost absolute when the society has as its predominant aim the spiritualisation of its life in all its aspects; for the competition for earthly riches then proves almost a menace. Which race or nation ever gained cultural or spiritual refinement without sufficient leisure to contemplate mental and spiritual realities?

How did people fare under this system? Was it that they lost efficiency and moral vigour and became slavish? Were the masses degraded and discontented? Our past history surely does not reply in the affirmative. India's material prosperity, her great achievements in various arts and crafts, her manhood, all are well-known. If the caste system were indeed such a vicious thing, how were all the past glories of India possible? It is often forgotten that there is in the caste system itself a spirit and a provision for the gradual promotion of lower castes to higher and higher grades. The caste system is not a dead machine. It is extremely mobile. It provides for admixture of castes, for intermarriage, for granting greater and greater privileges. India's social history is extremely chequered. Which country has shown such amazing powers of assimilation as India? Caste system is not all conservatism, it is also liberalism. These two opposing forces are equally operative in the Hindu society and steering it along the correct course. If we study the history of social evolution in India from the pre-Vedic period down to the present day, we shall be amazed by

the variety of changes through which it has passed. Our critics do not care to remember that our present social system is not as old as "four thousand years." It has undergone changes with the changes of conditions in India. S. T. observes: "If you believe that four thousand years ago your inspired countrymen established the most perfect possible social system, you will not work to obtain a better system—rather you will resist the idea that any improvement can be found. Fixity—finality—satisfaction with the old and already established—a supreme and immovable conservatism: this is the real answer to the Hindu social problem." We Indians however do not recognise India in this characterisation. It may serve the purpose of a foreign critic but not of truth. For this criticism is ignorant. We would ask such critics to point out another country where the social system has undergone as much change as in India. Does the modern West differ fundamentally from the medieval? What are those cataclysmic changes? It may be said that fundamental changes were not necessary in Western society because there was no caste system there. True. But that does not mean that caste system was wrong or unnatural. Each society seeks to serve an ulterior purpose through its social institutions. India had her own purpose to serve. And that could be best served through the caste system. The problem that India was faced with and had to solve appeared also before some of the Western nations: the problem of foreign races and cultures. What has the West done? She has ruthlessly exterminated them wherever possible, and antagonised them where she has failed to destroy. Compared with this brutal attitude, the caste system, with all its inevitable defects, was a much better and more honourable and humane solution. So the caste system was necessary. But it was never fixed. It underwent tremendous changes with the passing of ages and it will undergo yet more changes to accommodate itself to the requirements of the present age.

To us, looking from the outside, the much-vaunted Western society appears to have more blemishes than our own. But we have the good sense to feel that an outside view of such an intimate thing as society can at best be partial. We do not rush in like some proverbial creatures. But we regret to observe that we have often found in foreign critics of our institutions an amazing self-complaisance. One cannot truly understand our social system unless one views it as one belonging to it. How does the caste system appear to a Hindu? Or rather how did it appear to him?—For we are no longer ourselves now, we are

confused. It is not the limitations and rigours that appeared prominent to him. It was the inner purpose that they served that filled his mind and actuated him. He did not feel that the caste system was *imposed* on him by the wicked Brahmins. He felt that it was as much his as a Brahmin's. He felt that the whole of life and duty was meant for the realisation of an eternal end, to reach which was in the power of every one. The duty that was allotted to his caste was enough for his purpose. The social disabilities there of course were. It is true the higher castes often felt the pride of position. These were the defects of this system. There were also the outcasts. But good was overwhelmingly more in it than evil. No social system can ever be perfect. India can proudly claim that she did not make wealth the standard of social superiority. Despite all these defects, the average Hindu's mind thrived comfortably within this system. The Hindu proved as much efficient materially and intellectually as any other race, showing that the caste system did not cramp the capacities of men as is sometimes supposed. As to spirituality, we have already shown how much India has achieved in this line,—even her common children. Every Hindu felt himself a co-operator in a system which was designed to serve as a means of elevation of every race, man and woman to the position of Brahmanahood. This Brahmanahood did not in his view consist in birth or social position, but in knowledge, culture and spiritual wisdom. And in the achievement of this end, no caste or race was ever idle. Every section of people strove unceasingly to acquire greater and greater refinement of mind and spirit. That is how so many religious sects arose among all classes of people. And it will be noted how each of these creeds taught its votaries not only highly metaphysical views of God, life and the world, but also refinement in behaviour, in food, marriage and domestic relations. Thus lower castes reached higher levels of culture. And such castes were in a subsequent period actually incorporated into higher castes by being granted the privileges of interdining and inter-marriage between them. It is unhistorical and ignorant to maintain that castes were fixed and their rigours unrelenting. So the Hindu did not trouble himself about the negative aspects of his society but lived his life pursuing the high ideals of religion and culture and saw his caste eventually promoted to higher ranks.

Before the new Western industrialism came into India, there was no social confusion as in the present days. In fact the present social unrest is pre-eminently the effect of India's

economic ruin. We do not deny that even before that there were causes for social unrest and even if the British had not come into India, social changes would have been inevitable. But there are ways to bring about those changes. In the past ages also such social transformations were brought about, but in peaceful ways. The present social unrest is suicidal in many respects. To-day, non-Brahmins will have nothing to do with Brahmins, their holy books, their Sanskrit language and their religious views. In the past they would have sought to approximate the Brahmins in their excellences and thus achieved social upliftment. This suicidal element in the present-day social movements is not only hampering the progress of reform but is also weakening society and nullifying its beneficial inheritances.

When people found that their caste occupations were gone, and even agriculture did not pay enough, they no longer cared to observe the niceties of their caste duties. Money was wanted, and it must be found anyhow. Castes began to usurp each other's opportunities and no longer could competition be held in check. We have observed before that the elimination of earthly competition was necessary for the cultural and spiritual growth of the people. It was obligatory therefore that no caste should encroach upon another caste-profession. To-day we consider this restraint as a sign of snobbery. We grow eloquent over the Western concept of the dignity of labour, as if our people ever shirked a work when it was their duty. True dignity of labour really existed among our people. For we were taught that *whatever* the nature of our duty, however low in appearance, when done in the required spirit, as an act of *dharma*, it was the highest action possible, as uplifting as the service in the temple. That indeed is dignity of labour and not taking to anything for the noble purpose of earning money. We are eager to teach our higher castes dignity of labour. It may be necessary under the present circumstances to do away with the restrictions of occupations. But if a Brahmin or a Kshatriya does not to-day take up the profession of a Sudra, let us not call it snobbery. It is the ancient instinct of caste *dharma*. Let us not call a noble thing by a bad name.

The elimination of caste limitations did not however create opportunities of earning for the people. Avenues of earning were blocked by the ruthless competition and exploitation of the Western merchants. If people could somehow hold on to their ancestral professions, there would have been better chances of fighting the Western invasion. But that was not

possible. Thus it is that India to-day presents the woeful picture of a nation of economical and social vagrants. When people found no opportunity of earning, their despair and wrath fell on their own law-givers.—It was their ugly social system that was responsible for their present disabilities! Our Western Gurus came and lectured us on the crudities of our religion, morality and social customs. We swallowed whatever they said without a grain of salt. And the internecine quarrels began. Let us break the wicked social laws and we shall be saved! Unfortunately salvation is yet far off, farther than before; and the consequence has been that our social solidarity is gone. We are now unconscious of our social purpose, we have lost faith in our past, the good that was in it is no longer at our service, and we are at the mercy of all sorts of wild fancies. This social disruption is directly the consequence of the Western economic and cultural impact on India. But our critics do not care to know what we were in pre-British days, how we fared under the caste system, and that the evils were not its only features. They do not feel the constructive and positive spirit that lay behind the limitations. They look at the dry bed of the river and is struck by its high banks, but have not the imagination to feel that once there flowed along and between them a mighty current leading directly to the sea. And they grow eloquent over the social consequences of *Mayavada*!

And our treatment of our women!—How atrocious! This is a puzzle to our critics. They are ashamed to own us as a civilised race because of our infamous treatment of our women. But if our women had been what their sisters in the West at present are, surely they and we would have been acclaimed as quite civilized. But unfortunately, civilization is a word which has no fixed connotation. We in India find much in the modern Western woman, which we scarcely admire and would never wish our mothers and sisters to imitate. All that glitters is not gold. The modern Western woman is not such a happy and perfect being as is usually imagined. A tree is known by its fruit. If the characteristics of the modern Western woman are so desirable, why is it that marriage in the West is becoming daily a mere verbal affair, losing its sanctity and depth? How is it that divorces are becoming more and more numerous? How has it been possible for Judge Lindsey to reveal such horrible conditions of young school-girls? Why is chastity becoming a by word of ridicule? Why is the happy home getting rarer every day? Why are women becoming more

and more frivolous? We by no means indict the entire womanhood of the West. What we mean is that much of the so-called modernism of the Western woman is of questionable merit,—it has yet to justify itself, and that so far as our present knowledge goes, it has proved on the whole harmful. Sane minds are increasingly realising that the old-world idea of woman, as the chaste, faithful wife, dignified mistress of the home and affectionate mother of children, is more fruitful and real than the present-day masculine and frivolous aspect of womanhood. When the 'civilized' nations are finding their experience of the modern woman so distasteful, 'uncivilized'. India may well be justified in not condemning the present position of her womanhood. Surely there is much room for improvement in it, but not perhaps in the fundamentals.

The purity, dignity and nobility of our womanhood can stand comparison with those of the womanhood of any other country. Even our severest critics (of course the truthful ones) will admit this. It is not so much the faults of our women as our men's treatment of our women, that they condemn. Let us see how much truth there is in that condemnation. First of all, there is the charge of child and early marriage. Most Indians feel apologetic before this charge. But is it, or rather was it, such a bad custom after all? One argument against early marriage is that it assumes that all women must marry. Hinduism does hold that most women, and of course most men, must marry. It must be always remembered that Hinduism considers chastity as the very basis of moral and spiritual life and takes the utmost care to have it well established in the life of individuals and society. It will not allow any practice and custom to exist which will in any way militate against this central motive. Hinduism therefore does not encourage celibate life within the society itself, unless the celibates earnestly devote themselves to some noble, altruistic, moral and spiritual ideal, and even in such cases, they are expected to live a super-social life. The underlying idea is obvious. A celibate who will live the ordinary, worldly, life and yet will not marry, will more often than not go sexually astray. It is idle to deny that this observation is fundamentally true, for the sex instinct is indeed very strong in the ordinary man and woman and cannot often rest without satisfaction. Worldly celibates therefore are bound to prove injurious to the morals of the society. Of course, a society which does not lay such importance on chastity can afford to be mild in its restriction of celibacy within society. But India cannot. For her

foundation and goal being spirituality, she cannot afford to be lax about chastity which is an essential condition of spiritual growth.

So India has made it a general rule that all men and women should marry. Those who would not marry must go out of society in the name of religion or similar high ideals. Of course such a general rule cannot but prove harmful to a few. But social laws, and for the matter of that, all laws of collective life, suffer always from such defects. It is true this custom tells more heavily on the women than on the men, because men marry at a later age than women and they develop by that time a sense of responsibility which helps them to choose themselves whether they should marry or go out of the world.

The second argument against early marriage is that it ruins the health of the girls by too early consummation of marriage and deteriorates the manhood of the nation. These charges are quite true, so far as they are real. We have to admit that in the present days these evils have become more rampant than in the pre-British days,—that is to say, in so far as early marriage exists. We have mentioned previously how in our early boyhood, we have seen the older generations of our village men and women possessing well-grown physiques, free from weakness and disease. Early marriage was the rule in those days. Yet, how is it that there was no deterioration of the body? One obvious reason was of course that there was then joy in life and plenty of nourishing food available. But the more real reason was that consummation of marriage was delayed to a much later age. This restriction was possible because of the joint family system and social cohesiveness. We are here speaking of Bengal. In Bengal, the little girl when she was married was not always allowed to live in her parental home, but was brought to her husband's, more truly, to her father-in-law's place where she was daily taught, directly and indirectly, the ways and customs and the responsibilities of her new home. This marriage was not so much a relation contracted between the husband and the wife as that the girl changed her parental home for the home of her father-in-law. Here she was never allowed to know her husband unless and until she was considered by the family to be fit for it. Thus the apparent evils of early marriage were carefully obviated.

It is pertinent to ask, why was early marriage at all necessary if consummation of marriage was duly delayed?

The answer lies in the constitution of the family in those days—the joint family system. A Westerner will scarcely be able to understand the complex forces that work in such a family and the responsibilities the women of the family have to bear. Their first duty is of course to carefully and smoothly serve the multifarious interests of such a big family ;—all must be satisfied and yet no abnormalities should be allowed to develop. Their second and more important duty is to hold the entire family in trust and love. Human mind is the same everywhere. The Hindu also has selfishness, jealousy, anger, distrust and all the evils that man is heir to. Any of these can easily devastate a family in no time. It can be easily guessed what tremendous responsibilities lie on the shoulders of the ladies of the family, for it is they and not the men, who hold together and look after the family. The women have to be very tolerant, very patient and understanding, absolutely unselfish and supremely loving. And it is to the glorious credit of Hindu women that they often rose equal to their duty. Such women necessarily enjoyed the respect due to a queen and a goddess in the family and society.

Now, such goddesses cannot be made easily. Why do we love our sisters always? Why sisters always love their brothers easily, however ugly and bad they might be? It is because in our early years, our mind is more generous and unselfish and can love more easily and that love becomes more permanent. With adolescence we develop idiosyncrasies, are particular about our choice, have more pronounced likes and dislikes, and cannot love so disinterestedly and lastingly. That is why grown-up girls could not be expected to enter a new family and thoroughly assimilate herself into it. She could not be expected to love either her husband or his people so wholeheartedly. She would often prove a foreign, unassimilated element in the family, causing conflict and disruption. She would not also so thoroughly assimilate the ways of the new family, the associations of her father's home having been too deeply impressed on her mind. These psychological reasons made it urgent that the bride should be of young age and undeveloped mind and easily assimilable. Hence the system of early marriage. Family life in India was supremely happy in those days, and succeeded in producing many great women whose piety, unselfishness, service and wisdom still exist as sacred traditions in every village.

The joint family system is disappearing with the coming of the British to India. The reason is often economic. Money is

scarce. We have become much too poor and have become more selfish. Early marriage is now harmful, because the counterbalancing influences of the joint family system exist no longer. This as also various other reasons have compelled the marriageable age of girls to be raised considerably. Even without the efforts of Indian social reformers, the changed socio-economic and cultural conditions would have abolished early marriage,—not because it was such an evil and shameful thing, but because it does not suit the present conditions. In the ancient ages, early marriage was unknown. In course of time, circumstances necessitated the origin and growth of this institution, changed conditions have again annulled it.

The essential pre-requisite of early marriage is the joint family system which is also its proper atmosphere and safeguard. The joint family system is rapidly decaying under the new economic conditions. The new economic necessities are driving men out of their ancestral homes and villages to distant towns and cities. The village industries are mostly dead now. People are compelled to look for "service" for their livelihood. So when the men go to towns, their wives and children also have to follow them there. The joint families are automatically breaking to pieces. Those members of the family, who can earn hard cash in Government services or as lawyers are alone the principal support of the family. Those who are not fortunate enough to have acquired sufficient literary education, have to rely on their more affluent relatives for the support of themselves and their wives and children. When the village industries were alive, such parasitism was not necessary, because all members could find more or less employment in their family professions themselves. When living is so dear, it cannot be expected that brothers will forever bear the burden of their less fortunate brothers. They have to separate ; and brides require to be educated and grown in age so that they may take immediate charge of their husbands' households. That is how early marriage is getting out of vogue more and more quickly with the passing of years.

Foreigners cannot be expected to go so deeply into our social motives and purposes. Our own people also have unfortunately forgotten them and hang their heads in shame when they can legitimately hold their heads high before all world.

It is our opinion that the true secret of the laws and customs pertaining to the inter-sexual relations in India can be found easily, if we bear in mind that chastity is always

considered by Hindus as the most precious of life's possessions. In a joint family, or in any family, the open association of man and wife is always considered bad form. India never denied the fact that sex-consciousness is most pernicious and has its gross as well as subtle forms, that the attraction of men and women, even of the highest type, has at its base some form of sexual consciousness (except, of course, when they recognise each other as only spirit). It is therefore considered bad form that any association of men and women, which has reference to sex instinct, should be done publicly. Such an exhibition is bound to have adverse effect on young minds whose first training in life has always been considered in India to be Brahmacharya (continence). The husband and wife must never meet in the day-time. The wife shall go to her husband only after the whole house has retired and must return from him before the family has awoke. In fact, in a typical Hindu home, even the slightest expression of sex-attraction is carefully avoided. We well remember the horror of the villagers in the early days when a bride was ever proposed to be sent to live with her husband who perhaps had been working away from home. This open association with husband and the implied neglect of the responsibilities of the family home were considered scandalous. Now things are totally changed. Now it is the rule that wives live with their husbands. There are many anomalies in our present conditions. We have not yet settled down to any new plan. We are yet on transition. What form the family or the conjugal relations will finally take in conformity with the Indian genius, is yet to be seen.

Chastity, again, in our opinion, seems to be at least partly at the basis of the *purda* system. This *purda* system is the second great charge against the Hindus. No doubt it is bad. It affects health. But we must not forget that too much freedom also often results in a hysterical life for the modern woman. How *purda* came to originate and be established in India has not yet been fully ascertained. Some hold Mussalmans responsible for it. There is undoubtedly some truth in it. Others consider it to have been originated as a sign of respectability and aristocracy. But there are evidences that from very ancient times, Hindus have formed the habit of allocating separate jurisdictions for women, separate scopes of social and family activities, and separate portions in the home to reside in. Women used veils in ancient times. Besides the very genius of the Hindu race was directed to the conservation of sexual purity. All these, we think, resulted in

too much accentuating the differences of men and women. We must also remember in this connection that Hindu women did not often require to go out of their homes in discharge of their duties. Most of their duties were located within the home itself. This also evidently contributed to the growth of the *purda* system.

Anyhow, it must be admitted that the *purda* system had some adverse effect on our women. But it will be a great mistake to take it at its face value, that is to say, as an imprisonment of their women by Indians. The custom grew without any conscious effort of the men themselves. And women enjoyed the utmost freedom within the limits. An inside view is the only true view. Once the limitations of the *purda* are recognised, the rest is all freedom. Most Hindus will emphatically assert that their mothers were the queens of their homes, enjoying the respect of all the members of the family. The *purda* is not what the foreigner thinks it to be. He is also apt to conceive the *purda* and the position of women in all Oriental countries to be the same. This is a great mistake. This at least is certain that if the ideas that are associated in the average Western mind with the *purda* have any actual basis, it does not exist in India.

The third charge is about our treatment of our widows. Our foreign critics fail at the outset to understand the significance of widowhood in India, and that is partly because they do not understand the significance of Hindu marriage. Here also the secret lies in chastity. It will be apposite to quote here what we wrote on other occasions regarding the Hindu marriage :

"The significance of Hindu wifehood often proves a puzzle to many. The glorification of Sati-dharma apparently indicates that the position of the wife is in itself well-recognised and honourable. Yet every wife considers her position truly honourable only when she has become a mother. From yet another standpoint, that marriage is looked upon as the highest in which the husband and wife do not know each other physically and live a life of unbroken continence. Marriage from that point of view is a concession to human weakness which fears to stand alone and seeks the companionship and service of another, and thus falls short of the ultimate ideal—Sannyasa. These three aspects of a wife's position may seem unrelated and mutually contradictory. For it may be quite plausibly argued that if we look upon marriage as a necessary evil,

woman's position either as mother or wife has a stigma attached to it. And again, if motherhood is the higher ideal, surely the honour of wifehood suffers. This apparent puzzle is easily solved if we remember the idea underlying all these three viewpoints,—the idea of chastity. Yes, wifehood is glorious if it is instinct with the noble ideal of Sati-dharma or a similar spiritual ideal, for it then becomes a means to higher realisations. Such spiritual idealism presupposes a high degree of sex-control and is therefore much better than vagrancy and debasing sentimentalism. But a woman should emancipate herself from even the restricted sexuality which wifehood implies by bearing one or two children,—motherhood implies sublimation of love-emotions and greatly helps the elimination of sexuality from life—and refusing thereafter to have any carnal relations with her husband. Motherhood therefore indicates a greater realisation of chastity. But it is of course best to maintain absolute continence even though married. Even that however falls short of the highest ideal, for even in it sex-consciousness is not totally absent. 'The very highest is therefore the monastic ideal. . . . That life is the highest which implies the greatest amount of chastity.'

"What is Sati-dharma? It is one aspect of the Hindu ideal of the spiritualisation and deification of every being. The ultimate object of Sati-dharma is purely spiritual. The wife seeks constantly to look upon and realise her husband as the Divine himself. Her daily ministrations to her husband and his family are sacramental to her. Her life is a continued act of worship. This is why when the husband dies, she does not set up his picture on the altar of worship. The worship of the eternal God, which while the husband was living was being done through him, becomes now direct and immediate. She gives herself to purely spiritual life, to contemplation, meditation and worship of her chosen Divine Ideal. She does not feel any break between the life of the wife and of the widow."

It will be seen from the above that widowhood is not a life of mourning at foundation, but a release into a higher spiritual freedom. The life of the spirit that she developed as the wife now becomes more pronounced in her widowhood. We need not, therefore, shed too many tears on her fancied miseries. Miseries she has, but these are more economical than psychological. When the joint family system flourished, the economic position of the widow was always more or less ensured, either in her husband's or in her parents' home. She had also ample scope then of living a disinterested, serviceful and religious

life. The disruption of society has greatly circumscribed those opportunities, and she has now to look for other scopes for the career of her soul's life. Her economic position also has become precarious. That also requires to be improved. Swami Vivekananda often used to suggest that the village education of India might profitably become the widows' special province.

All these difficulties there are. But the modern critic is more solicitous of the widow's sexual life than her economic or spiritual life. We are not unaware of the many falls of young widows. But no tree should be judged by the worm-eaten fruits that lie on the ground. The essential question is whether widowhood has always resulted in moral degradation. All honest people know that the reverse is the fact. We are not unmindful of many exceptions. These we impute to the disturbed social conditions and the consequent loss of morale by the people. We for ourselves will not judge Hindu widowhood by the present state of it. Offer the widows means of honest livelihood (that is quite possible without remarriage) and scope for altruistic activities and the present regrettable state of things will quickly disappear.

Regarding the remarriage of widows, Swami Vivekananda used to scornfully remark that he did not know that the greatness of any nation depended on the number of husbands a widow got. He considered remarrying by a widow as a regrettable fall from the ideal. The argument, often put forward, that since men are allowed to remarry, women also should enjoy the same right, is not so convincing as it appears. First of all, some people must stand for the higher ideals in society ; up till now, the higher ideals and nobler traditions of society have been in the keeping of our women. *Some* must be entrusted with the difficult task of their maintenance. Why should not women continue to be they? Such a clear division of duties is necessary in corporate life.—Everybody's business is nobody's business. Secondly, that there are psychological differences between men and women is being increasingly recognised. Woman is more idealistic in nature than man. It is more favourable to her nature to be faithful unto death. To contract conjugal relations with more than one man in life would be doing violence to her nature. Naturally, therefore, if idealism is to have place in social life, it will be better to leave it to women to maintain it than to men.

It would be idle to deny that such a task necessarily imposes great hardship on the widows. But we can scarcely

forget that if the social ideal is to be maintained on a high level, this imposition cannot be escaped. We must not be too soft-hearted. This world is a very imperfect world and we have to make the best of things. We may seek to alleviate the sufferings of the widows, but let us not do so through their remarriage. The beneficial influence the Hindu widowhood is exerting on the conjugal life of the people cannot be over-estimated. With the disappearance of the noble ideal of a widow's life, the ideal of married life itself will degenerate. The respect for motherhood will appreciably deteriorate. And above all, the extreme regard for chastity which is the very life-blood of the Hindu race, will become very much weakened. Can we afford to lose so much? If not, let our noble widows suffer for the nation. They have always received the homage of our heart and they shall receive it unto eternity.

From what we have said about our socio-economic system or about the position of our women, it does not follow that we want those conditions to be perpetuated or consider them to be perfect. We hold that till the beginning of the modern era, India did very well in all those respects and need not be ashamed of her achievements. We know that conditions have changed profoundly and therefore our customs and institutions also must change. And they have indeed been changing. Did not Swami Vivekananda exclaim in the surety of his unerring vision: "I see India is young, she is not old and effete"?

(To be concluded)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES

(Continued from the last issue)

Sri Ramakrishna's high estimate of his great disciple, Swami Vivekananda, is well-known. To quote the words of Swami Ramakrishnananda (Sasi):

"Gurumaharaj in telling the story of Naren's (Swami Vivekananda's) first coming, said, 'When I saw this boy enter the room I thought, can such a boy come out of Calcutta where everyone is mad after money and pleasure—where everything is *Rajasika* (feverishly active)? I could see that his mind was three-fourths turned inward and only with the other fourth was he doing all these outer things. One corner of his shawl was dragging on the ground, his hair was a little dishevelled, as if he was careless about such things.' "

How the Master felt towards Naren is made plain by the following incident narrated by Yogin-ma :

"Once Naren had not come to the Temple for some time and Thakur (Ramakrishna) growing impatient to see him, came to Balaram's house and sent for him. Naren came at his free hour. When it was nearly time for him to return to college, Thakur came to the ladies' quarters and called me. 'Naren must go back to college, can you not give him something to eat?' he asked. 'Then he added, (and he had such an winning way, no one could resist him) 'You have little boys who go to school, you must have simple curries for them. Can you not spare some for Naren? He is such a good boy.' I took some rice and a few curries and carried them to Naren. When he had eaten, Thakur told me to pour water over his hands, repeating : 'He is such a good boy.' Then Naren went back to his college but he came again later in the day.'" This was the first time Yogin-ma saw Naren.

Perhaps those were days when Naren was passing through hard times. In the words of Sasi : "Often he had to go without a meal. Once he had had no food for two days. He came that evening to the house of a friend where Gurumaharaj had also come. Gurumaharaj was eating, with Latu by his side. As he ate, Latu mixed some curry with rice, walked across and laughingly threw it into Naren's mouth. Naren told me at once he felt his full, as if he had eaten a hearty meal. . . .

"From the outset Gurumaharaj's love for Naren was unbounded. When Naren did not come to the Temple for a time, Gurumaharaj would grow so restless that he would weep even. Once when I was with him, he kept running first to the Ganges side, then to the road side, to see whether Naren was coming. At last he told me to bring a carriage. I ran two miles off to get one and together we drove to Naren's house. We found him in his dingy room on the ground floor. 'Why have you come?' he asked with evident annoyance on seeing Gurumaharaj. 'What will my family think when they see a *Sadhu* coming to see me like this?' In reality, however, he was annoyed that Gurumaharaj should have paid him so much honor.

"Naren's unselfishness and loving-kindness had no limit. . . There was no one more tolerant in the matter of mistakes. If any one committed a blunder he would say : 'That is very good. How could we learn, if we did not commit blunders?' He never condemned the man.

"Once when we were returning from Dakshineswar, Naren insisted on taking me home with him. His mother had saved

his supper for him, but without letting me know it, he gave this to me and went without food himself. When bed-time came, he put me on his cot under the mosquito curtain. I was very tired and fell asleep at once. In the morning when I woke, I found that Naren had spent the night on the bare floor at the other side of his room.

"He was very indifferent to his surroundings. In his own house he lived in a dark damp room on the ground floor. Books lay about everywhere. On the fire was always a pot of tea. Here he would sit and read, lost in his thoughts. When he grew tired or hungry he would drink a tumbler of the tea boiling hot and then go on with his study.

"While he was still attending college he used to study all day and spend the night in meditation. This constant use of the brain brought on severe pain in his head which kept him rolling on his bed for several days. Hearing of it Gurumaharaj came to the house of a devotee near by and sent for him. 'But he cannot get up from his bed,' some one explained. 'Just tell him, he will come,' Gurumaharaj replied. Naren came and as he sat down by Gurumaharaj, the latter ran his hand lovingly through his hair saying: 'Why, my boy, what is the matter? You have headache have you?' Naren said that at once all the pain left him.

"Once a drama by Keshab was to be performed and to Naren was assigned the part of a *Sannyasin* (monk) Gurumaharaj expressed great satisfaction when he heard of it and insisted on being taken to see the performance. Naren acquitted himself most creditably of his task and after the play was over Gurumaharaj had him brought out in the hall that he might again see him in the orange cloth. It seemed to give him the greatest pleasure to have him dressed as a *Sannyasin*.

"While we were living with Gurumaharaj at the Cossipore Garden House, there was a period when Naren spent all his time in meditation or in making *Japam* (repeating the Lord's name) until his eyes were red and he did not even come to serve Gurumaharaj. His longing to realize God was so intense that he declared: 'If by taking a handful of filth and swallowing it, I could realize God, I would do it.' One evening when I went to call him to his meal, he was sitting in meditation; and just as an expression of affection, I ran my hand over his back. It was at once stained with blood. I looked and saw that his whole back was covered with mosquitoes and was bleeding. He was completely unconscious of it."

Said Yogin-ma: "The night on which Naren took *Mantram* (received initiation) from Thakur he was like a mad man. It was at Cossipore Garden and all night he walked excitedly round and round the house. Finally he went to Thakur and said, 'Give me peace.' Thakur said to him: 'How little you can bear! This fire that is lighted in your heart I bore in mine for twelve years and you cannot bear it for one night, but come crying for peace. . . .'"

Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) who had come to the Master before Naren, was like his own son. He slept in the same room with him, sometimes in the same bed, and he dared to show a greater familiarity with him than any of the other disciples. When Sri Ramakrishna would be sitting on the floor, he would come up behind him, put his arms round his neck and rock him back and forth. Rakhal had no lack of reverence. To Sri Ramakrishna he was always a little boy. Sometimes Sri Ramakrishna would feed him from his own plate.

Despite his tender intimacy now and then a shadow of doubt fell across Sri Ramakrishna's mind. Did Rakhal look upon him as a real father? One night he had the proof. Rakhal was sleeping in his room. Sri Ramakrishna was thirsty and asked the boy to bring him some water. Rakhal gave a grunt of refusal, turned over on his mat and went to sleep. Sri Ramakrishna exclaimed with delight: "I see now that he really thinks of me as his own father;" and he went about telling everyone of the incident.

Whenever Sri Ramakrishna was asked how a man would act who had gone beyond the three *Gunas* (that is, had transcended material bondage) he always replied "Like Rakhal."

How the disciples passed their days is told in these words by the disciple Sasi: "It was only on Sunday that there was a crowd at the Temple; on other days Gurumaharaj was left alone with his few chosen ones. Not every one could stay with him, only those whom he chose to have. And why did he keep them? In order that in one night he might make them perfect. Just as a goldsmith gives shape to a lump of gold, so he would mould them so that their whole life would be changed and they could never forget the impression he had stamped on them.

"He possessed the peculiar power to discern at once whether a man was fit or not. Sometimes people would come and want to stay with him but he would see that they were not fit and he would tell them with child-like frankness, 'You would better go home.' When now and then there would be a feast and Gurumaharaj would be sitting with his disciples, a man would

sometimes come who was not really good but who by sitting with him wanted to appear as good ; at once Gurumaharaj would make him out and would say : 'Here is a man who is not pure. He will spoil my children.' Without hesitation he would send him away.

"When he was alone with his special disciples, they would sing and talk and play together. If a visitor came, he would tell him : 'Go and have a bath, eat something and rest awhile.' Then about two o'clock he would begin to talk and he would go on teaching for five or six hours continuously. He would not know when to stop.

"Sometimes Gurumaharaj would wake at four in the morning and he would call the disciples who were sleeping in his room saying : 'What are you all doing? Snoring? Get up, sit on your mat and meditate.' Sometimes he would wake up at midnight, call them and make them spend the whole night singing and praising the name of the Lord."

When Sri Ramakrishna's wife, Saradamani Devi, or Holy Mother as she is called by Sri Ramakrishna's children, first came to Dakshineswar, she was quite young and she had to live in the small ground-floor room of the Concert House. Often she had to live alone. "Only through one little opening," said the Holy Mother, "could I see the outside world and I would watch there all day and night just to catch one glimpse of Thakur, but when he passed he would draw his cloth across his face. Thus days went by without my seeing him."

She fell ill some time later. "One of the *Bhaktas* (devotees) of Thakur said I must move to another house, so he gave two large trunks of trees, costing five hundred Rupees, to build one. These were brought up the Gauges, and I told Hriday that he must tie them to the shore, otherwise the tide would come up and float them off. But Hriday tied only the outer one, and in the night the tide rose and floated the other one away and they had much difficulty in recovering it. In the morning Hriday began to scold me saying : 'It is your lack of faith that caused all this trouble.' But Thakur said : 'Why are you scolding her? It is because you neglected to tie the log that it has got away.' The logs were sawed up and a little house built for me in the village near the Temple. There I lived with Lakshmi and a maid-servant to care for me

"Hriday's wife who was stopping in the village near the Temple chanced to be ill at one time. She had a maid-servant

with her, but I also went to nurse her, while Hriday remained with Thakur. It was the rainy season and he was not well. As Hriday had all the worship in the Temple besides serving and cooking for Thakur, I was anxious lest Thakur would not receive proper care ; so my thought was constantly with him and I found it very hard to stay with Hriday's wife. Suddenly there appeared at Hriday's house a Brahmin lady who said : 'Why should you stay here? Your heart is all the time at the Temple. This servant can do what is needful here. Come back to Thakur.' So she took me back to the Temple and together we would nurse Thakur at night.

"I was always so shy when I came to him that I drew my veil down to my chin. He would ask me why I veiled myself and tell me to lift it. But I could not draw it up beyond my nose. One night, however, I remember he talked the whole night of the Lord and I became, as it were, mad. When dawn broke I found myself standing before him with my veil thrown entirely back from my face and lost in what he was saying. The daylight suddenly recalled me to myself. I drew my veil quickly and ran to the Concert House.

"Once I asked Thakur with what name I should make *Japam*. He looked up at me so searchingly that I was frightened and blushed. He replied : 'Take any name you like. Only believe that all power lies in the name you choose and it will surely save you.'

"I spent much time in my village also ; . . . During his last illness I asked to come and be near him and he allowed me to do so. Then when I would bring his noonday meal, I would sit by him for an hour, fanning and serving him."

These Saradamani Devi's own words give glimpses of her life at the Temple. Her days passed in loving, self-forgetting service, but some looked with questioning eyes on her presence there. "There was a *Bhakta* by the name of Yogin who spent much time with Gurumaharaj. One day the maid-servant, Brinda, said to him : 'Your *Paramahansa* is a fraud. He pretends to be very pious all the day, but when night comes and every one is sleeping, he slips away and spends his time with his wife.' This implanted a doubt in Yogin's mind and he determined to remain for a night at Dakshineswar and see for himself what happened. Just at midnight he saw Gurumaharaj's door open, while in the bright moonlight he could see Holy Mother sitting in meditation on the upper verandah of the Concert House. Gurumaharaj walked toward

it, passed quickly by and went on down to the *Panchavati* to meditate.

"Overpowered by a sense of the unworthy suspicion of which he had been guilty, Yogin followed the Master and threw himself at his feet, begging his pardon. Gurumaharaj smilingly assured him, then added: 'It would do no good to go to Mother. She is not in this world. Her soul has gone far above it. Did you not see as you passed?'"

Sarada Devi never complained of her wifely lot, nor did she feel it a hard one. She lived for many years in the home of her parents and it seemed often as if her husband had forgotten her. But when at rare intervals she saw him in his mother's house at Kamarpukur or in her father's house at Jayramvati, he was always gently mindful of her welfare and tried never to cast any shadow over her young heart. Holy Mother later when speaking of this narrated the following incident:

"Once I and one of the ladies of my family were eager to go to see the performance of some strolling players, but Thakur would not let us go. When he saw how disappointed we were, he was greatly concerned to console us. He himself acted out a play he had once seen, giving the words, the music, the songs, everything, although he had heard it only once. We were so carried away by his performance that we forgot all about the one we had missed."

Sri Ramakrishna often said to her: "When one has earthly children sometimes they are bad and disobedient, but the children I have brought to you (i.e. his disciples) are good and pure and will never cause you trouble."

The story of perhaps the greatest of Sri Ramakrishna's women disciples, Gopaler Ma, has been often told. The following incident, as narrated by Swami Ramakrishnananda, was characteristic of her. "One day after Sri Ramakrishna had passed away, some of his disciples went to see her and found her room full of mosquitoes and other troublesome creatures. Although she did not appear to mind them and kept on repeating the name of the Lord, it distressed them to see her in such discomfort, so next day one of the disciples carried her a mosquito curtain. That night when she sat down to repeat the Name, she found her mind constantly wandering to the curtain, thinking whether a cockroach or a rat might not be eating off a corner of it.

"Seeing this, she said: 'What! This wretched curtain thus to take my mind away from my Gopala!' And without

ado she made it up into a bundle and sat down again to her devotions with the mosquitoes all about her.

"The next morning we were just getting up at the *Math* (monastery) when Gopaler Ma appeared. She had walked all the way (at least five miles) and must have started at three o'clock. She laid the bundle down. 'What is it?' some one asked. 'It is the curtain you gave me yesterday. It takes my mind away from God. I don't want it,' was her answer ; and nothing could persuade her to take it back."

Yogin-ma said that when they (lady devotees) would catch the first glimpse of the dome of the Dakshineswar Temple from the river, they would grow so impatient to arrive and see the Master that they would feel as if they wanted to jump down from the boat and run over the water. Sri Ramakrishna used to tell them they could come in a boat, but he did not like them to return by the river after nightfall, so, often they would walk the long way back, reaching home at ten or eleven o'clock.

(To be concluded)

PROGRESS OF RELIGION DURING THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS*

[WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF
SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA]

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

ओ' सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजसिनावधीतमस्तु
मा विहिषावहै ॥ ओ' शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

"Progress" which means "going forward" does not apply, in the strict sense of the term, to the historical religions, as their reformers simply reinstate, during periods of decadence, the fundamental principles of their respective religions in their pristine excellence. Christianity, Buddhism and Islam are founded on the lives and teachings of Christ, Buddha and Muhammad and their teachings no subsequent reformer transcended. The word "Progress" however, may be used loosely with reference to such periods of decadence when the

* Read at the Convention of All Religions held on the occasion of the Centenary of the Brahmo Samaj last August.

activities of the reformers help religion to regain its former purity. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in the Sanatana Dharma of the Hindus. Neither founded by any man nor based upon the authority of a book, Hinduism rests upon some Eternal Laws which have been revealed in the pure heart of the Seers, called Rishis. This supersensuous knowledge, perceived only through the subtle power of Yoga, has been recorded in its entirety and purest form in the Knowledge portion of the Vedas. The real significance of these Eternal Laws is eclipsed, now and then, on account of various causes, and Krishna, Sankara, Chaitanya who are called prophets or Incarnations only re-established the true meaning of the Vedas in varying measures.

After Sri Gouranga, Hinduism passed through such a period of darkness during the eighteenth century. It was perhaps the darkest period of our national life during the last few centuries. The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed some ripples which were only the harbinger of a coming tidal wave. A momentous revolution has always its precursors. Historically speaking, two factors might be said to be at work in the progress of Hinduism in the eighteenth century. The first and the more important factor is the expression of the inherent life-principle which lay dormant during its period of decline. The second and the indirect factor was an adventitious cause, namely, the contact of India with Britain which accelerated this work of rejuvenation.

The characteristic feature of the nineteenth century is an awakening of the reflective spirit, a quickening of criticism, a revolt against authority and tradition, a demand for freedom in thought, feeling and action. The notion begins to prevail that truth is not something to be handed down by authority, but something to be achieved, to be won by free and impartial enquiry. A truculent spirit is noticed everywhere. The Christian Missionaries of Serampore who came to the country closely following the flag of the English rulers aided materially in quickening the spirit of protest against the religious ideals and time-honoured customs of the Hindus. Coming as evangelists of a new faith and apostles of a new culture, they made a profound impression upon the mind of young Bengal. The College of Fort William, started in 1800, accelerated the speed of cultural conquest. A group of anglicised Bengalees, under the leadership of free thinkers like D'Rozzio, relentlessly attacked the religion of the Hindus and took malicious delight in their open disavowal of Hindu social

customs. The teachings of the Sruti and Smriti were relegated to the scrap-heap. A decided leaning was shown to the Christian religion and to the conventions of the alien society. It was but the inevitable concomittance of the then existing state of Hinduism. The pages of the religious history of that period are blackened with internecine and shameless struggles between different sects. Vaishnavism, the religion of pure love, and Tantrikism, the cult of Mother-worship, became bywords for sensuality and corruption. Social vulgarities exposed themselves everywhere in their horrid nakedness. It is no wonder, therefore, that Christian Missionaries made a clean sweep of everything before them.

The outstanding reformer of the time was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He handled almost all the problems of the day, social, educational and religious, and left everywhere the impress of his great intellect. He gave a rational interpretation of the Vedanta Philosophy which justified the wisdom of the Hindu Seers, and thereby checked for the time being the proselytising activities of Christian Missionaries. He attempted a reconciliation of the fighting Hindu sects from the higher standpoint of Vedanta, in explaining which he generally followed Sankara, though he did not accept monasticism as the highest spiritual ideal. He was a close student of the Bible which he considered superior to the Hindu Scriptures as regards the sanction and basis of morality. He denounced the image-worship of the Hindus as utterly inconsistent with the highest religious ideal. The Raja, through his theistic interpretation of the Vedanta, preached the unity of God. The new religion, known at his time as Vedānta-Pratipādyā-Satya-Dharma (the True Religion as propounded by the Vedanta), was influenced, to some extent, by the monotheism of Islam and by the ethics of Christianity. The Raja had a very poor opinion of the Hindu Puranas and failed to find therein the evolution of the grand ideal of Bhakti. With the zeal of an apostle and the self-denial of a martyr, he vindicated the unity of God. He was the first Hindu to attempt a rapprochement of the ideals of the East and the West and to conceive the ideal of a synthetic religion.

The orthodox reaction of the Hindus under the leadership of Sir Radhakanta Dev went against the liberal policy of Ram Mohan Roy. The Christian Missionaries also became more vigorous in their activities after the passing away of the Raja. The mantle of Ram Mohan fell upon Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, who was more of a devotee and a

poet than a polemical philosopher. His views against image-worship were more pronounced than those of Ram Mohan. He changed the new religion to some extent, and named it "Brahmoism." The monotheistic religion of the Raja was modified by Devendra Nath into intuitionist dualistic theism. The Maharshi was greatly influenced by the Upanishads and felt little attraction for the Bible. But in his later life he repudiated the claim of the Vedas to infallibility and laid greater stress upon intuition and reason.

Even during the life-time of Devendra Nath, Brahmananda Keshab Chandra Sen became a noted leader of the Brahmo Religion. At his time the Brahmo Samaj became the most powerful platform for the dissemination of the religious ideas. He soon became the leader of the more forward section of the Brahmos and founded the Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj. Pratap Chandra Majumdar, Bejoy Krishna Goswami and Sivanath Sastri were among his able lieutenants. Unlike his two great predecessors, Kesab did not know Sanskrit. He held Christ and Christianity in greater veneration than did Ram Mohan and Devendra Nath. A momentous event in the life of Keshab was his meeting with Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar in the March of 1875. Since then a profound change was noticed in the religious convictions of Keshab. We shall come to this point later on.

The Brahmo movement of the second and third quarters of the century helped to make Hinduism dynamic and liberal and saved it from the bigotry of the orthodox school. It is true that it could not touch the masses. But its activities extended to the other parts of the country, and everywhere it has made the way easy for a broader and more catholic conception of religion. It has enfranchised the mind of young Bengal and made it alive to the consciousness of a new ideal. It tried to bring about a harmony of religions through eclecticism. The greater part of its activities was devoted to social reform, the influence of which upon the Hindu Society cannot be gainsaid.

Like the counter-reformation movement in the Roman Catholic Church, orthodox Hinduism also raised its voice against the protestant Brahmoism. Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachudamani and Sri Krishna Prasanna Sen became popular interpreters of orthodox Hindu Philosophy. Bankim Chandra Chatterji gave a rational explanation of Hinduism, especially with regard to the life of Sri Krishna. Bhudev Chandra Mukherji wanted the Hindus to follow their time-honoured rites. Vaishnavism

and Tantrikism revived under Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Siva Chandra Vidyarnava. The Yogic practices also began to attract the attention of a section of the people. The reaction against the Brahmo ideal went so far as to give an esoteric and dogmatic interpretation of and to justify many Hindu rites and ceremonies. Theosophy did a signal service to the cause of Hinduism by stemming the tide of Christianity, particularly in Madras. Like the Arya Samaj in the Punjab it appealed to the educated section of the Hindu community. It gave a mystic explanation of the Hindu conception of heavenly planes and the hierarchy of Hindu Gods and Rishis, etc. It has also stimulated a desire among Indians to study their sacred books, especially the Gita and the Upanishads. Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, gave a theistic interpretation of the Vedas, and enjoined upon his followers to perform the five obligatory sacrifices of the householder. He believed in the Divine origin of the Vedas and laid the greatest emphasis upon its study. The Arya Samaj denounced image-worship and the Sraddha ceremony and adopted a vigorous attitude in the matter of social reform. Hinduism thus passed through the travails of a new birth by the action and reaction of the orthodox and the heterodox ideals. The real meaning of Hindu religion was not yet clearly comprehended.

During the second and third quarters of the century various reforms were suggested and some of them partially carried out. But it was a piecemeal reformation of Hinduism. The different sects took up different facets of Hindu religion. The conservatives fought for the husk whereas the radicals clung to the polished grain. But none of them thought that neither the husk nor the grain could help the growth of the plant. The grain requires the protection of the husk for its germination. Without any loss or damage to its own integrity, the evolved instinct of the race required a healthy assimilation into itself of the new ideas and ideals which came into the country in the wake of foreign contact. Besides, the supreme necessity of the time demanded a synthesis which, while realising the eternal principles of the Sanatana Dharma, would recognise the value of its rituals and mythologies for the evolution of a complete spiritual life—a synthesis which would not only weld into a homogeneous whole the heterogeneous ideas of Hinduism, but would also justify its claim as the eternal religion by demonstrating its all-inclusive character as comprehending the other living religions of the world. This demand of the time was fulfilled in Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna was a unique product of Hinduism. An embodiment of purity and renunciation, he directed his entire heart and soul, even in his boyhood, to the realisation of That by knowing which everything else in the world is known. His soul-enthraling prayer, sincere devotion and child-like eagerness for the vision of the Divine Mother were the means by which he realised this desired goal. He observed the rituals while on his way to the goal but discarded them when he reached it. He demonstrated that formalities of religion have a great efficacy for the aspirants but a Siddha Purusha does not stand in need of them. He practised Sadhana through various disciplines of Hinduism. He followed the principles and observed the formalities of Christianity and Islam, and at the conclusion of each Sadhana realised the same truth culminating in the Monism of Vedanta. Thus he justified the wisdom of the Vedic Seers, "The Truth is one but the Sages call it by various names." The cardinal features of his realisations may be summed up as follows. Dualism, Qualified Monism and Monism are but three stages in the unfoldment of spiritual life through which every sincere Sadhaka must pass. Monism is the last stage when the perfect soul realises his oneness with God. Religion can be transmitted to others by the will and the touch of great teachers. In the Sanatana Dharma of the Vedanta are to be found the eternal laws of all other religions of the world. Every one must stick to his own religious ideal and think that other religions also proclaim the same truth through different ways. If one religion is true then all other religions must be so. All religions alike have produced their saints and seers. Not new to the Hindus, these truths have been repeatedly declared in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. Without Sri Ramakrishna they would have been equally authentic. But without him they would have lost in the modern age the stamp of authority that only comes from the direct realisation of God. They would have remained subjects of the obscure disputes of the Pundits.

Sri Ramakrishna reasserted in the modern age of science and reason the great Truth of Hinduism and also of all religions, that God is the most real thing in the world and all else is false. The condition of his realisation is the utter renunciation of "Lust and Gold." Sri Ramakrishna wonderfully reconciled the bellicose ideals of Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga and could offer this grand synthesis because he stood at that point of equation in which the great conflicts of religions neutralise one another.

A flower in full blossom cannot but attract bees from all quarters. Keshab met him and was profoundly struck by his spirituality. Keshab enriched his ideas about the Motherhood of God from Sri Ramakrishna who also broadened his conception about the harmony of religions. This found partial expression in the Navavidhan, the name by which Keshab's party came to be known after some of his co-workers had separated themselves from him and founded the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. The Navavidhan aimed at founding a Universal Religion. Its creed was eclectic in nature, being derived from Hinduism and largely supplemented by the Bible and influenced by the thoughts of Hamilton and Reid of the Scottish School of Philosophy as well as some of the theistic thinkers of the West. An eclectic religion select the best things out of several religions and seeks to fuse them into a unity—a unity which perhaps is not perfect, being neither natural nor living. Hence it cannot be synonymous with Universal Religion.

• And soon a new wave of Hindu revival passed all over the country. By coming in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, a number of Hindus who had discarded, according to the prevailing fashion, their sacred threads, again accepted them. Bejoy Krishna Goswami who later on became an apostle of Vaishnavism, was greatly influenced by Sri Ramakrishna. Hirananda of Sindh, a close follower of Keshab, was much drawn to Sri Ramakrishna and spread his ideas in his native province

The task of spreading the message of harmony and toleration as preached by his Master, fell upon Swami Vivekananda who infused a new life into the dead bones of Hinduism. He carried its banner to the New Continent and stood there as the representative of the oldest religion of which Buddhism is a rebel child and Christianity a distant echo. He preached there a religion to which other religions of the world were only a travelling, a coming up of different men and women through various conditions and circumstances to the same goal. He proclaimed the unity of God and the unity of man to the world. He gave out through the Parliament of Religions, held at Chicago, the great truths of Hinduism. Man does not travel from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from truth that is lower to truth that is higher. He denounced the theory of sin and laid the greatest emphasis on the inherent Divinity of man. Brooding over sin does not make a man virtuous. He broadened the outlook of the world regarding the Sanatana

Dharma which, rightly understood, is not a religion among religions, but Religion itself, the Absolute Religion. From the highest flight of the Vedanta Philosophy of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the lowest idea of idolatry with its multifarious mythologies, the agnosticism of the Buddhists, the atheism of the Jains, each and all have place in Hinduism. And of this Hindu religion the distinctive feature is that of the *Ista Devata*, the right of each soul to choose its own path and to seek God in its own way. He justified image-worship as suitable for particular persons all over the world. Though the ultimate Truth is beyond name and form, yet It is sought to be realised by different religions through different symbols such as the Cross or the Caaba, the Church and the Mosque, the Book or the Image, the Chest and the Dove. Denunciation by some of the image-worship prevailing in certain climes and ages does not deprive it of its spiritual value. Further it cannot be gainsaid that apart from its symbolic character the image has a spiritual reality of inestimable value to its own votaries. The liberal reformers of Bengal of the nineteenth century, who thought the principles of Hinduism to be the cause of social evils, directed their activities to reform Hinduism. But Swami Vivekananda prescribed remedies of social evils by keeping intact the eternal principles of the Sanatana Dharma.

Swami Vivekananda gave a wider interpretation of Karma Yoga suited to the modern age, and boldly asserted that if Jnana and Bhakti are ways for the realisation of God, then Karma Yoga, the service of man knowing him as the veritable manifestation of God, is equally efficacious for the attainment of the Highest Truth. If the one and the many be indeed the same reality, then it is not the recognised modes of worship alone, but all modes of struggle, all modes of creative activity are paths to realisation. To labour is to pray. "To him," in the words of Sister Nivedita, "the worship, the study, the farm-yard, the field are as true and as fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple." "Arts, Sciences and Religion," said the Swamijee, "are but three different ways of experiencing a single Truth. But in order to understand this we must have the theory of Advaita."

The twentieth century has dawned upon the history of the world with a new hope, aspiration, faith and outlook. In the course of two decades India has traversed the track of centuries. Bigotry has given place to catholicity. The Bahais,

the Ahmadiyahs, the followers of H. H. the Aga Khan, like the Sufis of old, have liberalised the conception of Islam. The creeds of Buddhism are being made popular in the land of its birth. The intransigent Christianity of the last century has become more accommodating to the cherished ideals of the people. Sikhism, especially in its reformed character, has become a force in the Punjab to reckon with. The old cry of truculent protest against the Sanatana Dharma has given place to the new slogan, "Back to Hinduism." In place of blind imitation of Western ideas, we find a healthy acceptance of the wisdom of the Aryan Seers assimilating into it the researches of modern science and philosophy. Religion which was banished from society and which hid itself in the forest and worm-eaten books, is swiftly occupying its legitimate place in the scheme of life. It has supplied the Jacob's Ladder joining the earth with heaven. Renunciation and purity are being recognised as the acid test for leadership in all spheres of work. The conviction is daily gaining ground that religion does not depend so much upon formalities and conventions as on the attitude of life towards the world. Realisation of ideals and its accompanying transformation of character are being recognised as the criteria of spirituality. The ideal of monasticism has captured the imagination of a cultured section of the people. The necessity for supersensuous perceptions is being felt by the contemporary philosophers for solving their many outstanding problems. One growing tendency among religious aspirants is to discard the hereditary preceptors and receive instructions from those who have dedicated their lives to the acquisition of spirituality. Thus religion has caused a new ferment in the individual as well as collective life.

What is the trend of modern religious thought? The world asks: "Is there not a unity of Spirit? Is there not a Universal God?" Shall people go on asking, "To which God shall we offer our oblations?" Every religion is demanding to be recognised as the Universal Religion. But what are the conditions of a Universal Religion? Such a religion cannot be a historical religion solely based upon the life of a man or the authority of a Book. It must recognise rituals, mythology and philosophy as suitable for different grades of evolution. It must acknowledge Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Yoga as equally efficacious for the attainment of the Highest Truth. While recognising the empirical reality of the universe, it must soar into the ineffable realm of the Absolute which is the only basis of a stable philosophy. It must recognise the

inherent Divinity of man and therefore must be a cult of hope, faith, strength and fearlessness. It must be broad as the sky and deep as the ocean, accommodating infinite varieties of thoughts, innumerable creeds and dogmas and recognising all religions with their kernals and husks as leading to the same goal. Thoughtful men have begun to recognise in the Vedanta the expression of the Universal Religion. Vedanta has already glided into society with gentle footsteps. Like gentle dew drops, again it is proclaiming the arrival of a radiant dawn. It will alone lead us to the broadest conception of the Summum Bonum, the liberation of Self which goes with the service of humanity.

Let this Convention proclaim the New Message: "Peace and goodwill to all ; malice and hate to none."

ओ० पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

ओ० शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

THE WAY TO FREEDOM

[A story]

BY GITA DEVI

Through the heavy torrents of the monsoon rain a small cottage could be seen, lit up by the flashes of bright lightning ; and from its windows flickered a dim light.

Inside there sat a small group of men and a boy of about seventeen. They were silhouetted against the red light of a wood fire. They were talking of many things,—one began telling his friends of his pilgrimage across the great snows to Kailash, the dwelling place of Siva and Uma.

The boy listened eagerly and also asked many questions about the route ; for he was determined to make a pilgrimage to this Holy Place.

A few months later, Sivaprasad walked along the hot dusty road. He did not notice the slow-moving bullock carts, the mango trees or the sparkling streamlets. He had come many miles on the pilgrimage and now he was returning from the Holy Place. His face was sad for he was disappointed. He had found no God, the gap in his heart was still empty for something he knew not what. He was thinking: "Is there a

God? What is religion? I have read many books and have seen many Sadhus, yet they have not helped me." He was thus returning to his mother disappointed.

Thinking these sad thoughts he caught up with an old Sadhu. Out of habit he saluted the old father. "How child? why such a sad face returning from God's own dwelling?" "God?" said Sivaprasad, "Where is God? I have not found Him although I have read the Holy Books, performed various sacred rites and gone on pilgrimage."

The Sadhu looked quietly at him. "Is it so, my son? Art thou heart-sick? Religion is within. God is within. Until thou findest Him there thou canst not find Him without. Come, let us travel together and let me beguile thy sorrow with a story.

"In the olden days there lived an old *banya*, named Ram Saran, in a little village on the banks of the Ganges. He was a very devout Hindu, so after his daily bath in the Ganges he would sit and chant 'Toolsidas' *Ramayana*. He had a small green parrot with a red ring round its neck, called Mitoo, who would sit with his head on one side listening attentively to his master's reading.

"Ram Saran was very fond of his parrot. He talked much to Mitoo, and taught him to utter the name of Rama, at which he became very expert.

"One day a Sadhu came to the village and happened to pass Ram Saran's house. Seeing the Sadhu, Ram Saran wished to pay him a visit, so after observing his daily duties to his Lord he set out. Just as he was leaving Mitoo called him and said, 'You are going to the Sadhu, pray ask His Holiness why I am not yet released from bondage. The Holy Books say that whosoever takes the name of Rama will be freed from his bondage; here I am always taking His name, yet I am not freed.'

"Ram Saran was a little surprised to hear his parrot say such things, but he remembered his request and told the Sadhu what had passed between them.

"The Sadhu hearing the story, sat very quiet and still, without replying. When Ram Saran came home for his dinner, Mitoo at once asked him what answer he had brought. So what could poor Ram Saran do but say that he had no answer and that His Holiness only sat quiet without replying.

"The next morning the parrot was found dead in its cage, and his unhappy master was very sad when he carefully took him out and put him under a tree near-by. 'No sooner had he

done so than Mitoo suddenly came to life and flew on to one of the boughs. Ram Saran was half pleased and half amazed, and said, 'Ah, Mitoo, Mitoo, why did you deceive me? How, being dead, did you come to life?' Mitoo replied, 'My beloved master, you yourself brought me the secret. You said that in reply to my question the Sadhu had sat silent and still. I understood that he meant that I could not gain my freedom by merely repeating Rama's name, and that I should control my sense-organs and absorb them in Prana. The Prana, I must dissolve in the mind, and with the mind thus concentrated I should take His name; then only would His name help me to gain my freedom. I did so, and you thinking I was dead opened my cage and set me free.'

"Hearing the parrot's words it struck Ram Saran that he himself after reading the Scriptures and observing all the rites of his religion, had not yet attained *his* freedom. So he went back to the holy man begging him for his help."

After telling his story the old father did not speak. He was watching his young companion's face which had lit up with a great understanding.

Many years later, in a monastery at Benares, a much loved monk attained the Everlasting Peace. It was the young boy who had walked alone to Siva's dwelling in search of the Great One.

THE MODERN EDUCATION OF THE ORIENTAL WOMAN

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

It is clear that if the modern mind, with its scientific severity and its accurate sense of time and place, is to find any Oriental expression, the school will have to become as much a part of life to the Eastern girl as to the Eastern boy. Severe intellectual discipline and anxious knowledge of facts must be added to the delicate grace and deep mother-wisdom of the Oriental woman. Truth must be carried from the mythological into the scientific setting. The passion for knowledge must no longer be reserved for the religious, but must also be awakened, on what we commonly distinguish as the secular, side of life. Strong personal refinement will no longer appear as guide sufficient in facing the problem of life. Warm affection will no longer be thought the only desirable qualification

for the sick-bed nurse. And the information and training, necessary to such offices, will have to be sought by a girl as eagerly as was ever the knowledge of cooking, or the skill to offer household worship.

But the school and the home, while thus equally necessary, must in the ideal education act and react upon one another. They must not represent different and antagonistic worlds, but separate elements in a single complex whole. The one must illuminate and explain the other. That which at the hearth-side forms a vague but beloved dream, must be brought by education into clearness and understanding. That life is foredoomed to failure in which school and house seek to thwart and baffle one another. Thus, the heroic literature which in the family is a haunting inspiration, becomes in school and college an ever-widening field of joy and knowledge. The gentle dictates of the mother are heard again, with more impersonal authority, from the lips of the teacher. The growing intellectual vision makes increasingly precious all that the love and faithfulness of parents and forbears have built up for us, through the patient ages of the past. Life moves onward, into wider and wider reaches of thought and expression, without sacrificing anything of its old integrity and coherence.

We cannot foresee a time when the school will cease to be a necessity. After the great transition is accomplished, when the whole of the modern consciousness has found its way into every Oriental language, the school will still be needed, to initiate the education of each rising generation on a level not lower than that to which the preceding was born. The perplexity of the present for Eastern peoples is much more profound. There is still before each one of them a long period of constructive adjustment, when the very materials have to be brought together, out of which the future of education is to be built. At all times, but more especially during such periods, it may be said that, important as are the methods of education, its aims and motives are even more so. What is the conscious purpose which Oriental nations ought to put before themselves, in this task of working out new conceptions of womanly training? Oriental countries are theocratic in type. With them, the nation constitutes a church, and each act of public and domestic life a sacrament. Without loss of this passionate reverence, they have now to turn about to the creating of a great secularity. Ideas, hitherto only Western and seemingly new-fangled, have now deliberately to be ranked as high as any in the heritage of the Faith. Self-organisation and indus-

trial co-operation, the civic spirit and the good of all the people, have now to take their place beside scripture and ceremony as obligations in no sense less sacred and less binding. The thrill given to the Greek by restrained expression, by nakedness of fact, by definition of limit, is now to be felt by all mankind. Orientals certainly must learn it, if they are in any sense to be modernised and made efficient for the struggle of the world,—for out of it was science born. Learning has now, in the East as in the West, to take on its largest relationships of space and time. Henceforth it is not enough to understand the structure of a plant. Its geographical distribution and the historical significance of that distribution have also to be grasped. No fact, no custom, no word, but to the modern mind has its far-stretching meanings and relativities. The depth and patience of mediæval culture would seem to be banished for a while, but only because the human mind is in the throes of taking on new superficial dimensions of an extent hitherto undreamed of.

If we are to avoid mimicry and parasitism, however, we must understand that these aims have in every case to be approached through the familiar. Botany, for instance, must be studied by one from one's immediate surroundings, from the rice in the rice-fields and the green growths about one's door. History must be a sense developed in every people from their own surroundings, used in the elucidation of their own past. Geography must start from the house itself, and focus itself on the Homeland. Language must be concentrated in the mother-tongue.

What vast labours of scholars and prophets will be necessary before such education can be placed on its feet in Eastern countries! And how self-effacing must the workers be! Men who might be famous and powerful if they uttered their voices in European tongues, will have to bury their glory, for the sake of the poor and oppressed, in their vernacular languages. Sons of the saints, apprehending afresh the highest ideals of humanity, must devote burning ethical energy to the interpretation of orthodox duties as enshrining these. Even failure in the humble task of aiding the homeland and mother-kindred will have to be recognised by the whole Eastern community as infinitely nobler than victory in any other field of effort. Such is the spirit that shall make it possible for the Oriental countries to bridge the perplexities that lie before them. Such is the communal striving that shall enable the Eastern woman of the future to sum up in her own person more than the glories of all the past.

WHAT WE ALL BELIEVE

By S. T.

"One test of truth is that people proceeding by different routes, arrive at the same destination." Another test may be that one person pursuing a line of inquiry along several different avenues, by means of each arrives at the same conclusion. . . . According to the orthodox Christians, this truth is: that God, the ultimate power and Cause of this universe, is a *Person*. Jesus Christ is His only Son and Incarnation. All the misery in the world comes through violation of the will of God, which is sin. Salvation, and the solution of life's problems, comes with forgiveness of sins through the sufferings and Atonement of Christ—through the individual's recognizing Christ as his Saviour, and in turn following Christ's path of self-sacrifice and self-denial.

The Christian Scientist and New Thought groups, on the other hand, smile at these "old-fashioned ideas" of sin and atonement. They say that God is *Mind*. The creative power behind all things is thought. Misery comes through wrong thinking, salvation through right thinking. The problem of life is solved by the individual through his right thinking, creating, or "demonstrating," desirable instead of undesirable experiences.

Then come the Hindus who tell us that God is *Absolute Existence*. Misery comes through the illusion of relative existence and separate individuality. Therefore salvation is not in demonstrating any individual experience, but in the renunciation of such experience—in non-attachment and non-desire for the things of the relative world, and coming into consciousness of the Absolute.

And again, come the Theosophists and the psychic group, whose whole philosophy is built round the development—spiritual, mental, and emotional—of the individual ego. They say that God is a great *cosmic Being*, who has delegated other beings—Masters, guides and supermen—to direct our spiritual evolution through a series of worlds. And the solution of life's problems is to maintain close and harmonious contact with these spiritual directors, to serve and obey them; and to progress under their guidance into states now completely beyond our comprehension.

You will notice that each of these theories apparently flatly contradicts the other ; and it is not strange that people seeking spiritual light from one to the other of these religious organizations, become confused and bewildered, and often end in worse case than when they started.

To me it seems that there is truth in each of these statements—but a complete and final truth in none. Many problems *would* be solved if men would practise the principles of love and selflessness taught by Christ—and by other great teachers. Thought is a creative force ; we are using it, and should use it constructively and intelligently. Egoistic attachment and desire do make for misery in relative life—which as we know it now, is a life of limitations and bondage. And it is reasonable to suppose that beings in other states of existence are influencing and affecting us, as our life in turn is affecting the animal and plant worlds.

But what of the other half of these statements of “absolute truth” ?

Who really knows either that God is a Person, or a Divine Mind, or Absolute Consciousness, or a Cosmic Being with benevolent intentions toward us? Men rationally feel that the power that creates life is a beneficent power—certainly not a power inimical to the individual lives to which it gives rise. Therefore they clothe that power with the most benevolent image *they* know, and declare that God is an all-good Father, or an all-wise and loving Mind. They feel a natural reciprocity between the universal life and their individual life, and that the natural relation between these two is one of harmony and joy, rather than of hostility or mechanical indifference. Therefore they take the most tender and joyous relations of their human experience, and say that the relation between God and man is that of father and child, or of fond guardian teacher and pupil. On the basis of certain facts they do know, they erect an elaborate superstructure of assumption—things they don't know and can't know.

I believe that we shall never have a dependable and satisfying religion until we cast from us as a deadly plague this habit of half truth and easy assumption. That there will never be a sound spiritual life until that life is founded on an honest basis. And the first hard fact that the honest group or the honest individual has to face, is that *absolute* truth can never be perceived through the faculties of relative beings.

Truth as we know it, is a progressive revelation—a certain

reading of what does exist. We perceive the universe through the instruments we have developed. We can frame no final statements about the nature of the world, God, the soul, matter, energy—because these instruments are not final. The world we know through the instrument of the human brain, is very different from the world known to the animal through his special instruments of scent, sight and hearing. The brain developed—and the jaw degenerated—when primitive men released energy by the cessation of wholesale fighting. When the men of to-day or the men of the future shall release still further energy by ceasing to fight altogether, we have no idea what instruments will be forthcoming, how the world will appear, or what will be known as truth, to beings with more extensive avenues of perception.

This is the answer to both religious and scientific finalists. Thousands of people who scorn the absolutism of religion, stand transfixed before the absolutism, the final “findings” of science. They are no more final than the findings of religion. They represent simply the most we know, through the instruments at present developed. Our business is to free energy, and develop finer instruments that may reveal a bigger section of the Picture.

Meanwhile let us frankly acknowledge: we have no absolute truth. We shall only know what the Infinite is when we shall have expanded into the Infinite, and are human beings no longer.* But there is a relative truth for our own relative life, that we can legitimately expect to know. There is a truth and a law for each state or kingdom as it evolves; and by taking that truth and following that law where we are, we shall work on honestly and naturally to the next state and to wider revelation.

The great failing of organized religion—of every religious organization I know anything about—is its persistent claim to *exclusive* possession of a *final* truth. It takes a certain aspect of truth for this time—the beauty of Christ's character, the law of right thinking, the noble principles of brotherhood and detachment—and calls that the whole of truth for all time. This is the basic blunder, the central weak spot, from which all subsequent weakness, bitterness and hostility proceed. A group of men set up a part of truth, and call it the whole. And because it is not the whole—because there was another

* Is this not exactly the Hindu position?—Ed., P. B.

great soul or another great law—another group rises and sets up another part. And so on—sects, denominations, divisions and subdivisions: part against part, all loudly proclaiming *unity* and *love* to a world that they have kept in an uproar down the centuries, with their own quarrels, persecutions and dissensions. . . .

The trouble to-day is that we have outgrown the old time type of religious organization, and have not yet evolved a new type in keeping with our present spiritual needs. So long as man is conscious of a higher state of existence to be attained, and is endeavouring to attain to it, so long will there be what is known as the spiritual life—and natural centers, congregating places, for the study and pursuit of that life. But the religious centers of the future can never be based on separative creeds; for the spirit of man has progressed beyond them. And it is this spirit of man, not the prestige of any objective organization or the triumph of any one set of people over any other—that the religion of the future will have to serve. A true spiritual center must be a center—not simply for the sayings and experiences of one great man at one period, but for every form of light and life we can lay hold on that does nourish and expand the human spirit.

Science expands the spirit. Psychology expands it. And metaphysics, and sociology, poetry and art and music—and, perhaps most of all—silence, and meditation: the common lifting of the heart to the same high goal. The religious center of the future must furnish all these helps—must sift out *the best* from every department of life; collect, interpret and relate the knowledge and inspiration available from all these different sources—instead of holding them mutually antagonistic, as in the past. It must be intellectually honest, spiritually generous and hospitable. . . .

When one turns from religious organizations to the teachings of the great prophets and founders of religion themselves, he finds instead of the bitter differences of their followers, a surprising similarity. Escaping from the heated tussle of sectarian dispute into the serene security of these spacious minds, is like coming from the mad *pêle-mêle* of a subway labyrinth into the calm peace of an open field. The direct study of these Masters frees and does not perplex and confuse the spirit, because their spirits and outlook were free. They were not attempting to prove the supremacy of an organization or cultural system. They simply give a principle, and say "try it—it works."

It was in a Mohammedan newspaper that I recently read : "If the *true* representatives of every religion could be brought together, it would be difficult to distinguish between them."

Do I hear a chorus of shocked protest from returned tourists against comparing their true Christianity with such "degenerate, negative religions" as the Taoism they saw in China, the Buddhism and Hinduism they saw in the temples and the ignorant beggar-monks of India and Ceylon? Well, I have heard as disillusioned protests from Hindus, Chinese and Ceylonese, who saw the "Christian" civilization of the late War, and whose students in our midst have the benefit of living in the Christian scheme of things that includes lynchings, murders, hold-ups, drug-rings, police corruption, and altogether the worst crime record in the modern world.

"But," I am indignantly reminded, "those things are not Christian. They are the very opposite of what Christ taught. If Christianity were truly followed—"

Exactly. And the things you saw in China and India were the very opposite of what the Buddha and the Lord Krishna and the Chinese sages taught. Read the noble scriptures of those Masters as carefully, as conscientiously as you read your own ; read the "Bhagavad Gita" of the Hindus, the "Tao Teh King" of the Chinese, the "Gospel of Buddha" and the "Precepts of Confucius"—and show me where you find one line of corruption or degeneracy, or anything but the highest and most sublime philosophy.

Child marriage, the burning of widows, corrupt beggars or corrupt police said to be the outcome of following the religion of Krishna, Buddha and Christ! It is not the following of a religion but the failure to follow it, that leads—in every country—to abuse and degeneracy.

People talk knowingly about "those negative Oriental religions." Yet how many people have actually studied them—first hand—not through the biased books or lectures of some Christian professor or theologian, but going to the original sources and to the teachers themselves?

Said the Buddha, "It is true, Simha, that I denounce activities—but only the activities that lead to the evil in words, thought or deeds. It is true, Simha, that I preach extinction, but only the extinction of pride, lust, evil thought and ignorance ; not that of forgiveness, love, charity and truth."

Nirvana, often translated "annihilation," is defined by the Buddha himself as the state of perfect peace or "no-passion"—literally, "no-flame" of selfish desire. "Good-will without

measure toward the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of making distinctions or showing preferences. 'This state of heart is best in the world,' said the Buddha, "it is Nirvana!"

Similarly with the "wu wei" of the Tao Teh King. "Oh, Lao-tsze—he taught 'wu wei,' *not striving*—is the usual comment on the philosophy of the Chinese seer. 'Wu wei' actually means '*striving through the power of the inner life.*' And where reference is made to 'the negation of the self,' the Chinese character used for Negation is that of 'a bird flying upward and not coming down again'—the soul forgetting the self with all its hampering disabilities, and flying on the wings of faith to its home in the heavenly kingdom. What a futile word is negation, to express this problem of self-adjustment!" (Mears.)

Their followers of to-day may have over-emphasized the negative aspect of Oriental philosophy, but the more I study the original teachings of the great Masters themselves, the more vividly I am impressed with the injustice of this charge against them of negation, with the vigor and earnestness with which they exhort to action, and with the amazing identity of the principles they all preached.

"Practise the truth that thy brother is the same as thou. Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good. Do no injury to any living being, but be full of love and kindness." This is not Christ, but the Buddha speaking.

"Let heavenly love fill you and overflow in you. He who loves, bears fruit unceasingly. The great shall be small, the many shall be few, evil shall be recompensed with goodness." This is not Christ, but the Tao.

"Knowing Truth, thy heart no more will ache with error, for the Truth shall show all things subdued to thee, as thou to Me. There is no purifier like thereto in all this world, and he who seeketh it shall find it." This is not Christ, but the Hindu Krishna.

In a comparative reading of these scriptures, you find that each religion had its Pharisees, its Judas, its simple saints, its arrogant ecclesiastics. You find that the spiritual experiences of the various Lords were surprisingly the same—their temptation and illumination; their ethics, their Path or Way, their highest philosophy.

The religion of the Buddha is contained in a single sentence: "*Self is death, truth is life.*" The Christ's: "If any man would come after me, let him *deny himself*, and take up

his cross, and follow me." The Tao: "*Retire thyself—this is heavenly Tao.*" ("Tao" meaning *Way*, or stream, of *Life*.)

The Buddha's philosophy is usually epitomized in the Four Noble Truths (the existence of suffering, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering, means to cessation of suffering); and the Eightfold Path which constitutes the means—Right Comprehension, Right Resolutions, Right Speech, Right Acts, Right Way to Earn a Livelihood, Right Efforts, Right Thoughts, Right State of Peaceful Mind. Do any of these sound negative and inactive? And the Buddha's own summary of his religion was: "Do no evil, do good, *purify the mind*. This is the religion of all Buddhas (Enlightened Ones)."

"*The pure in heart shall see God.*" The two Great Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the fourteenth to seventeenth chapters of St. John, are generally considered to summarize Christ's philosophy. But of only one category of the Blessed did he say that they should reach the highest realization and actually "see" God: that is, the pure in heart.

"*Purify the channels of deep perception,*" says the Tao—whose philosophy centers round an Inner Kingdom corresponding with the Kingdom of Heaven of Christ, and insists on the same quality—lowliness—the lowliness of water, instead of the lowliness of the little child, as the sole means of entering therein.

While the Yoga of the Hindus means *the purification of the heart and mind of the sense of egoism*, so that union of the individual spirit with the Supreme Spirit may take place.

For again, the final goal and supreme experience in all religions is the same—namely, "That they may be made perfect in One." "Bring soul and spirit into Unity," says Tao. "The world is overcome, aye, even here, by such as fix their faith on Unity," says the Hindu Gita. "To see one changeless Life in all the lives, and in the separate One Inseparable!"

And thus, through constant effort, unremitting self-discipline, the cry of final victory—final fusion with the Highest, on which the aspiring soul is wholly concentrated, to which it is wholly devoted. "I and the Father are One," says Christ. "I am Absolute Truth," says the Buddha. "I am Brahman," says the Hindu. "I am the I Am," says the Egyptian. Says the Mohammedan Sufi poet: "I am He!"

Oneness—Selflessness—Love—Truth: the purification of the mind and heart of self-interest and self-seeking; losing this small and mean self-consciousness, coming into the consciousness

of a perfect and all-comprehending One. This is the religion taught by all great souls. It is also the religion of atheist and agnostic, of materialist as well as spiritualist, of scientist as well as metaphysician ; of Oriental and Occidental, Jew and Gentile, American, Asiatic, African, European. We hunt everywhere for a religion, and we *have* a religion ! Selflessness, purity of character, oneness with God (the highest and purest being we can conceive of), a consuming and all-comprehending love for man ; this is the universal religion and ideal of every one of us. This is the religion of the human family.*

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION

In the year 1915 one of the most wonderful expositions the world has ever seen was held in San Francisco—the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. It so happened that the Exposition Committee, after considering a number of available sites, finally decided upon a large piece of vacant land now called the Marina, lying on the shore of San Francisco bay, just inside the Golden Gate and only three blocks from the Temple. From the Temple roof a full view was obtainable of all the operations from the beginning of laying out the grounds and putting up the many buildings.

In the preceding year, in preparation for the great event, Swami purchased numbers of all the national flags to be displayed on the various National days observed at the Exposition. He also installed a new system of electric lights which made the Temple look like fairyland at night and which could easily be seen from the Exposition itself.

Swami applied for and received permission to build a garden around the Temple. As the sidewalk extended clear up to the Temple walls, the garden could not be made without infringing on the sidewalk which was ordinarily required to have a width of ten feet. The city authorities, who held Swami in great respect cheerfully granted this permission.

* Extracted from *The Century Magazine*, New York.

Swami built a concrete wall around the street sides of the Temple running from the front steps on Webster street to the auditorium entrance on Filbert street. The wall was three feet high and three feet out from the Temple walls. The space between was filled with earth and with the assistance of a friendly gardener, the garden was stocked with plants and flowering shrubs, giving an atmosphere of beauty and refinement. An ornamental iron lattice fence above the wall protected the plants and flowers from passers-by. Statues and other decorative features made the garden one of the attractions of the neighbourhood.

The garden, the flags and other decorations were to serve a twofold purpose. The first was in common with other citizens and the business community—to honor the great Exposition—and the second was to attract a portion of the many thousands of visitors who would attend the Exposition. But, like Moses in view of the promised land, Swami was not to reap the fruits of his labors, for he did not live to see the opening of the Exposition.

BEGINNING OF THE END

In the same year of 1914, preceding the opening of the Exposition, the physical ailments of Swami had increased to such an extent that it was a marvel to those who understood, how he kept the body at all. One of the disciples questioned him on this point.

Swami replied: "A number of times during moments of excruciating pain, I would think, 'Let the body go, and end it all.' But I could not do it—the thought would come that the Mother's work must go on and I set my will to force the body to carry on. This body has become a mere shell and may go to pieces at any time. For three years now I have held the body together by sheer force of will."

So resolute and determined was that will that only a few knew the true conditions. His many activities continued unabated, but unmistakable signs began to appear that the body was yielding gradually to the heavy burdens imposed upon it. In the spring of 1914, Swami asked one of the students to criticize his lectures from the standpoints of diction, style and delivery. The student noticed an increasing quiver in his speech, which was attributed at first to an effort to give emotional effect to the principal points of the lecture. In that day's report on the lecture this point was noticed and criticised. Swami thereupon said that he would endeavour to eliminate

the quiver. The tremulousness appeared intermittently however, notwithstanding his efforts to control it, sometimes more, sometimes less, giving the student the impression that it must be from physical causes.

When it was again brought to Swami's attention in the month of December, 1914, he replied: "I have tried my utmost to control it so that it would not be noticeable to the audience, but always now, just as I go on to the platform, my Divine Mother appears to me and fills me full of such feelings of love that it is sometimes difficult for me to articulate. When by great effort I bring the voice under control, the quiver remains, as the result of the effort to control, together with the impossibility of entirely controlling these feelings, as they are growing stronger."

This was in the middle of December, when all were looking forward to the coming celebration of the day which perpetuates the birth of the Son of Man—the Messenger of Galilee. Christmas Day that year occurred on Friday and during the week preceding, unusual preparations were made for the occasion. The decorations were especially beautiful. All the pictures were decorated, that of Jesus being specially illuminated in honor of his birthday.

It was to be an all-day service, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., and, on the day previous, Swami assisted in the preparations, putting on finishing touches here and there, also getting himself in readiness for the lectures and the long program. It was 2 o'clock in the morning before the various tasks he had in hand were completed, so, as he would again rise at 4 a.m. he did not retire at all, simply resting, with no sleep to sustain him for the 15-hour service.

On the morning of the preceding day, Swami called a young man disciple and said to him: "I want you to promise me that if anything should happen to me in the near future that you will see to it that after my death my brain is removed and presented to a scientific institution to be preserved in alcohol for analysis."

On the morning of Christmas Day he repeated this request. Was this because he had a premonition of the end, given him by his Divine Mother? It was his belief that the brain of a Yogi would be found to differ in size and microscopically from that of a worldly person and that when this was demonstrated the scientific world would be compelled to acknowledge it. Thus he planned that even in death his body might serve the truth.

At 5-30 a.m. on Christmas Day the auditorium doors were opened and the devotees began to arrive. At 6 o'clock the service began with organ music, followed by a chant by Swami.

The beautiful decorations, the odorous breath of incense, the devotional songs and instrumental music, the chanting and reading from the sacred Scriptures and above all, the holy presence of Swami, a radiating force of divine purity and love, created an atmosphere irresistible in its appeal to every higher aspiration, in which every heart was uplifted and filled with holy impulses and before which all materialistic thought was softened and all unholy thoughts and impulses melted away like the snow before the burning rays of the sun.

As on other occasions, Swami did not leave the platform even for a moment during the whole day. How he mastered his physical ailments and made the pain-racked body endure during the fifteen hours, only he could say.

Apart from the three lectures at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., the time from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. was devoted to chants and songs and the reading and explanation of the Scriptures until the closing chant and benediction.

What a divine experience for those privileged to be present on that day when the coming to earth of the Son of Man was celebrated by one of the direct disciples of another Incarnation of God! The celebration came to an end but in the hearts and lives of many people its influence will be felt forever.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Mission, Barisal

The report for the year 1927 of this institution is to hand. The Centre has been in existence for the last 17 years and has been doing useful work which can be conceived under three heads: Missionary, Charitable and Educational. Two weekly sittings are held to explain to people the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and various scriptures. Volunteers of the Centre are deputed to nurse the sick at their houses, to pick up the helpless from the streets and send them to hospitals and to make all arrangements for their nursing etc., whenever required. Help in cash or kind is also done in necessary cases.

Towards educational service, the Centre started a Students' Home in July, 1927 in a rented house, accommodating 7 students, of whom only 2 are paying. The Centre requires a house of its own for all its different purposes as also for its Students' Home. The estimated cost is Rs. 25,000, of which Rs. 15,000 have been collected. All help may be kindly sent to Secy., R. K. Mission, Barisal, Bengal.

R. K. Mission Ashrama, Baranagore

We have received the Ashrama's report for the year 1927, and an appeal for funds. The Ashrama has been in existence for the last 16 years with the special object of sheltering and educating orphans, of which there were 19 last year. It also serves the neighbourhood in various ways.

It has lately acquired 8 *bighas* of land by the main road, on which it has started to build its own house. The estimated cost of the various buildings is Rs. 35,000, but it has only about Rs. 5,000 in hand. We earnestly appeal to the generous public to render unstinted help to the Ashrama. All help may be sent to the *Secretary, R. K. Mission Ashrama, Baranagore, Parganas, Bengal.*

Balurghat and Bankura Famine Relief.

The Secretary R. K. Mission writes :—

The situation in Balurghat continues to be the same. There is no chance of any improvement in the condition of the people till the next harvest time.

The Marwari Relief Committee has closed its work in Balurghat and in consequence we have been compelled to open a new centre at Agradukun, a village 6 miles from Balurghat. Another new centre was started at Nischintapur in the Union No. IV of the Poursha Thana. At present we have altogether three centres in Balurghat covering an area of 172 villages.

It is now five months and a half that we started relief work in Bankura. As the autumn crops have grown well at Koalpara centre, we have closed our work there. At present we have three centres in Bankura—at Barjora, Baharkuliya, and at Mahara. More than 1600 recipients belonging to 106 villages are getting weekly doles of rice amounting to 84 mds. The total amount of rice distributed till now in Bankura and Balurghat is 1720 mds. In the district of Bankura we have distributed nearly 1200 pieces of new clothes besides old ones and 392 patients have been treated by us.

We have to continue our relief work in Balurghat and Bankura till the 2nd week of November. For the completion of the work we require proper financial support from the public, as we are hard pressed for money.

All contribution, however small, in cash or kind, should be sent to the following addresses and will be thankfully acknowledged by the Treasurer, R. K. Mission.

- (1) President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O. Howrah.
- (2) Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
- (3) Manager, Advaita Ashram, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वराहविषाहत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

IV

(To an American friend)

NEW YORK,
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* * * According to Manu, the collecting of funds, even for a good work, is not well for a *Sannyasin*, and I have begun to feel that the old sages were right. 'Hope is the greatest misery: despair is the greatest happiness.' These childish ideas of doing this and doing that appear to me now like some hallucination. I am growing out of them. 'Give up all desire and be at peace.' 'Have neither friends nor foes, and live alone.'

'Thus shall we travel, having neither friends nor foes, neither pleasure nor pain, neither desire nor jealousy, and injuring no creature—from mountain to mountain, from village to village, preaching the name of the Lord.'

'Seek no help, from high or low, from above or from below. Desire nothing. Look upon this vanishing panorama as the witness. And let it pass.'

Perhaps these mad desires have been necessary, to bring me over to this country. I thank the Lord for the experience.

I am very happy now. Between my disciple and myself, we cook some rice and barley, and lentils, and quietly eat. Then we write, read, or receive visits from poor people who want to learn something. Thus I feel myself here to be more of a Sannyasin than I ever was in America before. 'In wealth is the fear of poverty. In knowledge the fear of ignorance ; in beauty the fear of old age ; in fame, the fear of slanderers ; in success the fear of jealousy. In the very body itself is the fear of death. Everything in this earth is fraught with fear. He alone is fearless who has renounced all things.'

Two of our friends want to arrange classes. I am no longer seeking for these things. If they come, blessed be the Lord ! If not, blessed the more be He !

AS WE KNOW HER

By THE EDITOR

(Continued from the last issue)

In judging the caste system, the position of women in India, India's economic policy or even her attitude towards politics, one fundamental fact has always to be borne in mind, namely, that the regulative ideal of India differs essentially from that of the West. We in India always seek not so much to regulate our environments as our own self. We try pre-eminently to adjust ourselves to the circumstances, not the circumstances to ourselves.

In the progress of man till he has reached the Absolute, these two elements there always are: man himself with his mental equipments and tendencies ; and environments, domestic, social, political, economical, etc., which are more often than not antagonistic to him. Man has always to fight his way on. He comes into conflict with his surroundings almost at every step. Nature herself is cruel with her inexorable laws. Through the thorny jungles of circumstances man has to make his progress.

Of these two elements of progress, we in India consider the first one—our own self—more important, whereas the West, as far as we have understood, considers the second as more important. We believe that we can achieve all powers by

adjusting and moulding our own mind. All is in the mind. If we can properly train the mind, we can attain even to the highest without troubling the least about our environments. Our method is the control of the mind, self-discipline. To a Westerner, this extreme and almost absolute emphasis on self-control appears as self-suppression and suicide. He must have 'individual freedom' (in the ordinary sense), and if the family, society, industrial conditions, the state or Nature seem antagonistic, well, it is his prime duty to change them, to remodel them according to his needs and ideas, and even destroy them if necessary. He wants to achieve his progress principally by changing his environments, not by changing himself.

It is easy to see what happens when a Westerner or any one with the Western view-point, sits in judgment on Indian life and institutions. He finds only apathy, squalor, laziness and weakness everywhere. He finds Indian society bowed under loads of superstitions. He does not know that we have drawn a magic circle around us which the outer influences can scarcely penetrate. We do not fight our circumstances so much as we fight our own selves. Within that inner circle, within our own selves, is the main field of our activity. There we live as alert as any race and there we measure, judge and achieve. But all this is not apparent to the unaccustomed eye. The passing events bring us good and evil, and more evil perhaps than good, but we do not mind. Let them all come, we know how to meet them. Is not the privilege of interpretation always ours? And do not things act on us according as we look upon them? So we change our angle of vision, see things in those aspects in which they relate themselves to the Eternal, and they yield to us their ambrosial essence, however baleful their exterior may be. To one looking from the outside, things may appear as bad as can be, to us they do not. Of course such interpretation is essentially an inner affair, a state of the mind, the realisation of new angles of vision.

These two facts, namely, that all progress is in mind and that environments act on us according as we take them to be, are very highly prized in India and considered very important in the conduct of individual and collective life. Their significance has been deeply impressed on the Indian mind, and now even the most ignorant villager knows it. It is mind that binds and mind that frees, is a constant dictum among all classes of people. And it is not merely spoken but is also acted upon. Thus our women,—from the outside their life

seems limited and cramped. But Indian men and women know that the outside means little. And whoever has the inside view of our women's life knows that their mind moves along high planes of thought and perception. The exigencies of history necessitated the external limitations, but they could not cramp the inner life of our women. Women created their noble world even within those limitations, and who that has not actually lived in it can ever measure the sweetness and goodness of that world? It is not vast space or stupendous action that creates goodness or greatness. Even a point contains in it the infinite universe if only we realise it. It is a profound spiritual truth ; but our women try to live up to it. Similarly of the caste system. Tears of sympathy gush forth from our eyes at the sight of our lower classes, and the tyrannical Brahmins,—how we gnash our teeth at their very idea ! But the masses have not been tyrannised over only, they have also been taught that the externals mean nothing and that in mind is everything ; and it must be admitted that nowhere in the world have the masses received such spiritual light as in India, though no doubt Indian masses have lacked material comforts to some extent. And so it comes about that even among the lowest of the low castes, there have been born saints and sages before whose wisdom and nobility of character even the proudest head will bow down in respect. To this day there are found among them saints who, though they ply their accustomed low trades and occupy low social positions, are yet highly honoured of all because of their spirituality. How has that miracle been possible ? By the wide propagation of that supreme truth that the mind is everything and external circumstances nothing. Foreigners have invaded time after time deluging the plains of India with their hordes ; and yet, the Hindu race with its ancient knowledge and superstitions still lives. What is the secret of this eternal life ? It is that the mind is everything. This expresses itself as an attitude of extreme and invulnerable conservation in times of danger. To-day the Westerner is the master of India. We have submitted to his political and industrial power. But that submission is only external. In all inner concerns we do not recognise him. He has no place in and no hold on our social and religious life. He is only a *mlechcha* in those respects and cannot be treated as an equal. The defects of this attitude are obvious ; but till a constructive and assertive spirit has reappeared in the society to squarely face the situation, such an attitude is the

only possible course, if of course we are to live. To-day we do not require to observe such an extreme conservatism, because the ancient spirit is awake again and we can face the new-comer on any plane,—he cannot injure us ; we hope and mean, on the other hand, to assimilate him.

This is how we Indians act and move. How do the Westerners act? When they go to a new country, they only antagonise the inhabitants, they cannot live in harmony with them. Wherever the white and coloured races have met, there have been disharmony and clash, not because of divergent political and economical interests merely, but mainly because of an inherent defect in the Western outlook on life, which is that the Westerner always seeks to remould the outside in order to fit it with himself. Unfortunately the outside does not belong to him only ; there are also other claimants to it, who may not like it to be so changed. Conflict is thus inevitable. If Western women want to improve their position, the first thing they do is to lead a campaign against men, because the prevailing conditions must be changed and men and their ways are essential parts of those conditions. If the working classes want improvement, the capitalists have to be fought against. So on and so forth. What a tremendous expenditure of energy and what noise and heat and suffering! And the results,—they are scarcely commensurate with the energy expended. But it cannot be denied that this also is one method of progress. The greatest defect of this method, however, appears to us to be its inherent tendency to generate an atmosphere of clash and conflict, in which the delicate flowers of spirituality can scarcely blossom and breathe. It also lacks depth of life and perception ; it rages on the surface. It is not that it produces no effect on the mind. It does discipline, witness for instance the tremendous organising abilities of the Western man, his power of obedience and efficient struggle, his developed sense of responsibility to the corporate life. But would it be wrong to state that this effect is not deep enough to reach those fine strata of the mind, where alone the spiritual battles are fought and victories won?

The Indian method of self-discipline is much more favourable to spiritual growth. It is only in the inner silence, undisturbed by the clamour of the externals, that the Light Divine shines ; and if one hungers after spirituality, one can do no better than dissociate oneself from the externals. It is this spiritual necessity as also spiritual experience that has

developed and confirmed the Indian method of progress. For, it has been found that external conditions are really the projection of our own inner states,—they have no independent reality of their own ; and also that as the soul soars higher and higher into the spiritual empyrean, environments lose their hold on it and fall off like scared leaves. Naturally, therefore, India has acquired the tendency of not fighting with circumstances directly.

It must not be understood from this that India wants to perpetuate the external conditions in the same form or that these never change in India. Conditions do change and are sought to be changed, but not directly. The mental changes that are directly and consciously brought about cannot but have their repercussion on the external conditions which automatically undergo a corresponding change,—they become pliant instruments in the hands of the internal creative forces. But of course this change takes time to become manifest on the surface. Thus in the present age, during the last hundred years, India has given birth to the synthesis, realised its perfect form internally and nurtured it in her heart,—she has brought the ancient spirit to play in the new field ; and now its actions are daily becoming more and more apparent on the external plane. India has internally won the battle, the external victory is only a matter of days. The period of silent growth is a puzzle to the foreigner,—he does not know the secret and rushes to the conclusion that India is dull and dead, lulled by the soporific murmurs of *Mâyāvāda*.

It will be superfluous now to point out that the idea that India lacks the spirit of progress and has to borrow it from the West, is ignorant and untrue. India is progressive. But her method of progress is different from that of the West. And also the direction of her progress is different. We are daily progressing spiritually. In the field of spirituality, we are carrying out experiments every day of our life. No age has lacked a profuse harvest. And if India has not been progressive, how is it that modern India is so different from the Vedic India?—And yet it must be admitted that the fundamentals of India's life have remained the same through the succeeding ages. It is sheer nonsense to say that we believe that four thousand years ago our inspired countrymen established the most perfect possible social system, that we shall not work to obtain a better system—rather we shall resist the idea that any improvement can be found. What we believe and how we act

have been pointed out above. The Hindu society during its existence of millenniums has shown as much variation and progressiveness as the Western society.

But perhaps here we should draw a line of demarcation between the Western idea of progress and the Indian idea. We do not believe in any significant far-off divine event which will sometime be realised on the earth. We believe that the lasting happiness or the eternal good of man cannot be realised either in social life or in the perfection of so-called civilization. In this sense we do not believe in progress. If it is thought that a time will come when this earth will be transformed into heaven, we say that it is an idle dream. Even as an idea it is absurd. In this relative world, there cannot be light without shadow. Happiness and perfection to be here, there must also be misery and imperfection. It has been asked: "Is there no possible advance or betterment in this life of ours? Are we fools to try? Has nothing happened throughout all these painful centuries but the continual piling up and tearing down of a child's house of blocks?" No doubt something has happened throughout all these painful centuries; but if that something has been good, it has also been evil. The Westerner may look around him and congratulate himself on the felicities he is enjoying, which his forefathers did not know three or four centuries back. But the Oriental also looks around him and bemoans his fall, remembers his ancient glory and sheds hot tears over his enslavement to the proud and ruthless races of the West. If all the nations were free and if Western nations were prevented from exploiting Asiatic and African nations, would there have been such 'progress' as we see in the West to-day? It is only at the cost of the rest of the world that the West is growing in prosperity. We may grow eloquent over internationalism, but we must not forget that the mutual hatred of nations never raged so furiously as now. We must not forget that the greatest and the most horrible war has been waged in *our* days. We have grown in material comforts, but we have lost spiritual idealism. No, no, this finite world cannot realise the all-comprehensive vision of humanity.

Progress is achieved along two lines, individual and collective. Individually, the only real progress is spiritual self-realisation and in this, man has to travel the strait and narrow path alone. He has to fight his lone battles. This is the only fulfilment of man. What he thinks, feels, wills or achieves is measured ultimately by the spiritual standard and this is the

only real standard of evaluation. In its collective aspect progress is achieved by men through their conjoint efforts by improving and reforming the conditions and institutions of corporate life, by devoting their energies to the service of the community. This collective progress has been and is being achieved more or less in all countries. India is no exception. But India has not forgotten two important facts in this connection: (1) there cannot be continuous progress for any nation,—there will come times when collective progress will receive set-backs;—history is replete with such tragedies; (2) man is not only a social being but also supersocial;—social achievements therefore cannot be enough for him; only in the Absolute is true perfection, peace and fulfilment of life, and collective progress even in its highest achievements can but be relative; man therefore must sometime or other leave the company of his fellows and start on his lone journey. Besides, however much humanity may progress collectively, it will be at too tardy a pace for the impatience of our spiritual hunger, and man's inner restlessness will make him seek the salve for his soul through supersocial, subjective strivings.

S. T. observes: "Through all the changing and experiencing and elaborating, something has happened. And that something that makes everything worth while to us, that makes us declare to a man that we would not go back, is—oddly enough—precisely the same thing for which the Hindus are striving: *expansion into a wider consciousness*. We are conscious of including more, much more, within our boundaries of life and possibility, than the savage or the pilgrim fathers—or even the people of the nineteenth century. We vastly prefer the contacts, the richness of association of our present day. We have finer instruments, more responsive material, control over more subtle forces—and so a wider range of experience. Electricity is better than gas or steam, wireless than cables or telephones, round the world intercourse than round the tape or the town.

"It is this progressive expansion that has made all the suffering and striving worth while—and that is the meaning of life, for race or individuals. *Progressive expansion*: this is reality for us, as truly as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindu. A gradual advance toward an ultimate perfection—or at any rate an ultimately satisfactory state. We believe in this, we are united as a social body to accomplish it; our interest, our faith, all our effort and our hope is centred and

staked on it. Is this great urge and instinct of so large a portion of mankind simply a delusion—a trick of nature? Is it never to be realized? Are we merely squirrels running round and round our caged wheel? I do not believe it."

An ultimate perfection is quite realizable, but only individually, not by the race, nation or humanity as a whole. "This great urge" is no delusion or trick of nature, but that is to be conceived only individually. To realise perfection on earth is to destroy nature herself; for nature must always be imperfect; to be perfect is to be Absolute. Nature cannot allow her own destruction. S. T. is deluding himself when he believes that progressive expansion is as truly a reality for the Westerners as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindus. We do not think that the Hindus and the Westerners are so differently constituted in the mind. Hindus also, like their Western brothers, have sought to realise unity amongst races and nations and have dreamt of world-unity. Westerners also have sought and are seeking individually to realise the Absolute. There is no constitutional difference between them. The difference lies in Hindus knowing more of the secret of the higher, spiritual, life than the Westerners, and is being thoroughly convinced that the social instincts of man are not the highest manifestation of his mentality, and that man cannot truly fulfil himself in social life however perfect it may be. In Hindu phraseology, the Western nations are predominantly *rājasika* in temperament and outlook and the Western idea of collective progress is born out of this *rājasika* outlook. They have not yet understood, as a race, the nature and meaning of *sattva guna*, which the Hindus as a race have done and are applying to their culture and civilization. When the Western nations will have enough of *rajasika* activity and be convinced of its futility, then they will come to feel that real progress can only be subjective and individual. Hinduism has therefore laid the greatest emphasis on individual Self-realisation. Hinduism knows that so long as man has outgoing (*rajasika*) tendencies, he will relate himself to external realities, and there must be efforts at collective progress. But knowing that man's true fulfilment does not lie that way, Hinduism has taught him to conceive his activities as the worship of the God who is in man and society and everywhere, and through this doctrine of *Karma Yoga*, has co-ordinated the two different lines of progress, individual and collective.

We do not believe like S. T. in the doctrine of progress in

the sense that the kingdom of heaven will be one day established on earth. This dream is not characteristic of the West only. Such rosy dreams come to all spiritually inexperienced nations. Such ideas were held by Hindus also at one time. But higher experience dispelled these childish notions. Hence the idea of Renunciation.

Apropos of so-called international unity, Swami Vivekananda, while visiting the West the second time, once remarked : "What is the beauty of unity amongst a pack of wolves?" Unity by itself is nothing. The motive of union and the intrinsic character of the uniting elements determine the value of unity. In the last analysis, it is individual Self-realisation that counts. India rightly lays emphasis on this. But from this it does not necessarily follow that we do not concern ourselves with the salvation of our brothers or that we do not work with any great enthusiasm to bring about good and happiness in the social life. Why have so many teachers taught in India? Has it been for themselves or for the good of others? The casual observer notes only the words of our principle but does not consider its implications. When we say that one's salvation is one's own concern, we also say in the same breath that one must shed his selfish and finite ego, one must change one's outlook of oneself and of the universe, one must learn to see things not as material and mental but as embodiments of God himself. All these are inseparable ideas to us. One aspiring after salvation becomes the worthiest servant of humanity, not the humanity of the fussy internationalists but as it nestles in the heart of God. To him, no man is insignificant. India surely can be proud of having done, of all nations on earth, the greatest service to men inside and outside her boundaries. In India, even animals have received worshipful considerations. It is idle to say that India's philosophy makes her children apathetic to one another's good. The fact is, in this funny world paradoxes are often the highest truths. It is only by renouncing the world that we are truly united to it, for then only do we realise it as identical with our Self. Only he who never cares for man loves man truly, for he then knows him as God himself. India fully believes in this truth and therefore considers the renunciation of and retirement from the world as a necessary step towards ideal life and noble activity in society.

This renunciation is a very important fact of life. It is not, as S. T. considers, an Indian equivalent of the idea of expansion. Though etymologically negative, it is not negative in signi-

ficance. It does indicate something positive, the fire of impatience with the finite and the gross, that the hunger for the Divine ignites in our soul. Renunciation is the passionate yearning for God, which consumes all the dross that is in us to make us pure gold. The idea of expansion does not indicate this fiery passion. Unless this fire burns within us, we do not feel any inclination to search for God the highest. Therefore Hinduism and other religions have emphasised renunciation as an essential pre-requisite of spirituality; all religions have required men to diametrically change the direction of their life's course.

Renunciation has two definite stages. The developed stage is obvious, as when people leave their relatives and friends behind and go out in quest of God. This phase is patent in the life of our devotees, monks and ascetics. Foulest abuses have often been heaped on their devoted heads and their life has often been considered a waste and they themselves a heavy drain on society. It is only the thoughtless that indulge in such criticism and their words do not deserve serious attention. But there is a preliminary phase of renunciation, which is more universal in India and interpenetrates the very texture of India's individual and collective life. We have already referred to it in another connection and form. It is that the true fulfilment of man lies not in active fight with his environments but in so disciplining his mind as to realise within himself a higher reality and find as a result the outer conditions changed and improved. This self-discipline is another name for renunciation. We renounce the lower self in order to realise a higher one. This is self-discipline. This kind of renunciation is, as we have seen, the very regulative ideal of our life from the highest to the lowest stratum of society.

It will be seen that this outlook on life is rather unique and is not what we deem 'natural'. We take for granted that the outside is nothing and that the mind is everything. This means that the objective world has not the same value to us as it has to be common mind. Consequently, in all our conceptions of an ideal condition, we do not figure it as an objective reality, but as a state of consciousness. We do not believe that there can be a heaven on earth in which, by a gradual process of greater and greater union of men, humanity will objectively participate. We believe that the kingdom of heaven is within each of us, and whoever will realise it there, will find it outside, but none else. We do not dream of a heaven after death,

where all good people will assemble. Such conceptions are childish. It will be noticed that many of the modern religious movements in the West conceive spiritual life as a mere extension, though in a transfigured form, of the earthly life itself. Spiritualism has this earthly outlook. Such an outlook may seem 'natural', but it is not grounded on truth, for the truth is rather the opposite as is borne out by metaphysics and the spiritual realisations of the mystics all over the world. Spirituality really begins with the transference of the centre of gravity of our life and the locus of our consciousness from the Objective to the Subjective, with the dawning perception that reality is not of the nature of an object, but of consciousness. With this realisation is born the spirit of renunciation. "The self-existent God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal self. Perchance some wise man, desirous of immortality, turns his eyes in and beholds the inner Atman." The spiritual life is not a mere continuation of our so-called normal life. Some time, somewhere, we have to turn a sharp corner and take a new direction. That is renunciation. In the days of Vedic sacrifices, when Self-knowledge as taught in the Upanishads was not generally known, the Aryans dreamt of heaven as the goal of existence. That goal was conceived as a mere extension, in a finer and superior form, of their earthly life. Renunciation then was not truly understood. But doubts arose. Heavens did not satisfy. And Self-knowledge was revealed. Then India really came into being. The entire life of man, individual and collective, began to be slowly moulded according to the spiritual necessities. The spirit of renunciation or self-discipline, that is to say, the idea of viewing life and reality as modes of consciousness, began to grow. The infiltration of this supreme idea into the Indian mind has gone on from the ancient Vedic ages down to the present day, till the whole society has been saturated with it. Every day a Hindu must sit at least twice in meditation withdrawing into the silence of his self, be he worldly or spiritually inclined. This practice is obligatory to all Hindus of the upper castes so that they may grow in detachment and inner vision. The people have thus been prepared to consider utter renunciation as natural and a matter of course. This preparedness is extremely important. For if we are once convinced that the ultimate end of life cannot be realised by a mere extension and expansion of our 'normal' life and by proceeding along the current of creation, we must learn to turn

back or change our course some day. But the power and feeling to so turn cannot be evoked in one day. These can only be the culmination of a process pursued through ages and lives. Is it easy to realise a state of mind favourable to the spiritual view of life? One must struggle birth after birth to realise the required outlook. Our mind is over outgoing in its tendencies. As animals and uncivilised men, we have indulged the outgoing tendencies for thousands and thousands of lives. The impressions thus acquired are hard to get rid of. India knows this ; therefore she leads her children through a gradual and steady process of self-discipline to the spiritual outlook on life. The entire life of India is a slow progress towards that beatitude which is renunciation.

This explains why we are not ready to replace 'renunciation' by 'expansion'. Hinduism has no objection to preaching expansion, provided the idea of renunciation prominently accompanies it. The reason stated above is a subtle one. It is nevertheless profoundly true and makes a world of difference between the outlooks on life. How the idea of expansion can be easily conceived as a mere extension of the present life, is regrettably manifest in the conclusions of S. T. He believes in realising the kingdom of heaven *on earth*. "The West," he says, "seeks the gradual raising of consciousness for the whole race, and individuals are content to be held back until the whole group can come up into realization." He adds: "There are powers in man awaiting unfoldment as incredible to most people of to-day as the power to fly or to talk over the air was incredible to their grand-parents. There are spheres of life awaiting our investigation, so exciting that the excitement of the little things at which we work so hard for a happiness that ever eludes—fade away like nursery soap-bubbles." This is all right, but this is not spirituality. S. T. forgets that psychical research and spirituality are quite different things. S. T. says: "We look for God. God in this world, is ourselves—the individual units of consciousness who together make up the Universal Consciousness. We have the power at any moment to unite and change our conditions, dispel our troubles—by following the Principle* that we know is the right and natural way for us. And we alone are responsible for all our pains. The nature of life, both individual and universal, depends on the use we make of the energy over which we have

* It is, according to the writer, conscious and intelligent co-operation of the human units.

control. We can make this world whatever we like. And when we are tired of making it a "human" world, of mixed and contradictory motives and enterprises, part selfish and part unselfish—we will make it a "divine" world, of unified and therefore, clear, comprehensive and satisfying consciousness." The writer also observes that the modern man does not like any religion because all religions emphasise the necessity of the renunciation of this life, and "it goes against, rather than with, his profound instinct for self expansion, and for joy in this life rather than scorn and condemnation of it." That is why the substitution of the idea of renunciation by that of expansion is dangerous. For what the above-quoted writer delineates may be excellent in itself, but it is far from true spirituality. We have already noted that individual and collective progress can never be simultaneous, or phases of the same process. The two are separate and different though no doubt each reacts on the other. The world-unity may or may not be realised. But every man can realise Divinity only within himself, and then for him only the outer universe will be Divine, for none else, the "whole group" will have nothing to do with it. Therefore, though it is quite up to every man to serve others and seek to realise better conditions in humanity, it would be a wild goose chase for him to realise his spiritual goal as a Divinely transformed humanity. S. T. fails to recognise the essential necessity of "turning back" in spiritual life. When India says, "Renounce!" it is not the picture of a vacuity that rises in the mind, but that of the breaking of shackles and release into infinite freedom, and of infinite illumination and bliss.

Does this ideal of renunciation hamper social progress? But are not the lives of the all-renouncing monks themselves a clear answer to this foolish query? Only a monk knows what a soft heart beats under his rough ochre garments. They judge by the exterior. They see the monk's external rejection of the world, but his brooding love for it they do not see. Besides, as we have pointed out elsewhere, no spiritual life is possible without the deification of the entire universe. This very realisation is a source of great well-being to a community. Just consider the supreme blessing of being looked upon as Divine by any one. Would not the very look illumined by such realisation emancipate?

In all that we have written above, it is not at all our purpose to assert that India has been or is perfect and needs

no improvement. We have only tried to indicate that India up till now has not done worse than other races or nations ; that it will be a mistake to judge pre-British India by modern standards ; that those customs which now appear harmful and repulsive were once the channels of beneficial influences ; that the present period of transition is no shame to us, for we have not slept but have responded at the earliest moment possible to the new situation ; that our fundamental ideals are quite sound and we need not be ashamed of them ; that we must carefully discover the deep purposes of our social workings and build up the future in the light of the past ; and above all, that we can look the whole world in the face, for we are verily the most innocent and the most spiritual and serviceful nation on earth. It is often said that we must not look back on our past lest we become careless of our present degradation. But it is time we warn our countrymen that we must not contract the habit of thinking ourselves too much degraded. What if we are poor ? This present age is too much solicitous of the physical comforts and the comforts of the lower mind of man, and has devised suitable philosophies and methods of work. Surely India must scorn to submit to such low ideals. By all means let us get rid of poverty and political subjection. But let us not be led away sheep-like from our spiritual ideals to the glorification of material attainments. All that is great and noble in man can be realised and manifested even through and in spite of material poverty. Let us stand on our spiritual integrity. Have we forgotten that poverty is the badge of highest manhood according to India ? When were we ashamed of poverty when it did not degenerate ? And why should it degenerate when we *know* that infinite power and glory is within ourselves, which no power in heaven or earth can ever check ? So let us not make too much of our material poverty. Let us not demean ourselves. Up, ye sons and daughters of India, evoke your sleeping powers and ye shall yet be the first to hail the Rising Sun.

(Concluded)

TO OUR READERS

From the Manager's Notice printed elsewhere, our readers will find that *Prabuddha Bharata* will appear in an enlarged and improved form from the next month. The price of the paper will also increase proportionately. We have long felt the urgent necessity of increased space at our disposal so that *Prabuddha Bharata* can properly fulfil its functions. *Prabuddha Bharata* has always tried to provide much food for thought, if not guidance to its readers, according to its light, in all deeper issues of life, individual and collective. It has also been sought to be made interesting and instructive. The next year is expected to reveal *Prabuddha Bharata* in a better form in all these respects.

It will be, we hope, helpful to our readers if we give them an idea of what they can expect in *Prabuddha Bharata* next year. (1) The series of unpublished letters of Swami Vivekananda which we are publishing now, will be continued throughout the year. Many of these letters will be found extremely interesting. (2) We know that the two series of conversations of Swami Turiyananda, which were published in previous years were much appreciated by the readers. We shall publish a third series next year. This series will be found specially valuable inasmuch as it contains many precious hints on practical spirituality. (3) A discussion of the practical aspect of religion is bound to be useful to many of our readers. We shall therefore print a series of articles on the Practice of Religion by Ananda, in which the writer will discuss various problems that face us in the life of religion. (4) The fountain-head of our spiritual wisdom is the Upanishads. We are sure a discussion of them will be welcome by all. Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D., the great Vedantic scholar, will contribute a series of articles on the Upanishadic Mysticism. (5) Prof. Radhakrishnan of the Calcutta University, who has deservedly earned an international reputation as an interpreter of Hindu thought, will contribute articles on Hinduism and allied subjects. (6) Our readers are aware that the great French savant, M. Romain Rolland, has been engaged in writing two great books on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. M. Rolland is a thinker of world-wide reputation. His study of these two great sons of India is bound to be highly interesting and instructive. The

readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* will have the special privilege of reading extracts from those works month after month in its pages. M. Rolland will contribute articles also on other subjects. (7) Principal Kamakhya Nath Mitra, M.A., will contribute several valuable articles during the year. Principal Mitra is not unknown to our readers. All his past contributions to our paper have been highly appreciated by all. His future contributions are expected to prove equally learned and attractive. (8) We hope to print a series of conversations of Sri Ramakrishna, translated from the diary of M., a disciple, as published by him in Bengali. These conversations will be absolutely new to our non-Bengali readers. The value of these conversations can be understood from the fact that the original Bengali books have become a religious classic in Bengal. (9) Also we intend to publish a series of articles by the late Swami Saradananda on the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna's life as well as on spiritual realisations. His writings throw a new light on many aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's life and on the intricacies of spiritual states. (10) We have been able to secure some unpublished writings of Sister Nivedita. She dwells with rare insight on the various national problems of India in these articles. These we hope to present to our readers in the course of the next year. (11) Madaline R. Harding will contribute articles on some of the recent religious movements in the West, which show striking similarity and even indebtedness to Vedanta. Mrs. Harding's article on Christian science and Vedanta was published early this year. Her future articles will surely be equally interesting and thought-provoking. (12) We ourselves shall contribute our (editorial) articles as usual, in which we hope to deal with various national and international problems, religious, cultural, social, etc. (13) Translation and annotation of valuable Sanskrit texts have been a feature of *Prabuddha Bharata* almost always. We want to revive it next year. Swami Nityaswarupananda will translate and annotate *Astavakra Samhita*, a masterpiece of Advaitic literature in Sanskrit. We may mention here that this book was a great favourite with Swami Vivekananda. (14) Want of space did not permit us to comment every month on the current thoughts and events and the various national and international problems that arise from time to time. We intend to revive this section next year. (15) We have been, during the last two years, reproducing interesting articles mainly from foreign journals. We hope to continue the practice next year. These articles have often been on Eastern, especially Indian, culture and religion, written by Western writers, and have indicated the

gradual spread of oriental ideas in the Western world. A knowledge of what the West thinks of us is desirable for us in India. (16) Lest our readers find *Prabuddha Bharata* heavy reading, we intend to publish also interesting religious stories and lives of saints ; and (17) illustrated articles on some of our prominent institutions in India and abroad ; these latter articles will give some idea of the practical work of the Ramakrishna order. (18) We hope to supply our readers with extensive reports of the activities of the R. K. Order in India and abroad. Many readers will find them interesting. (19) The Swamis of the R. K. Order will write regularly in *Prabuddha Bharata*, as also other eminent writers.

We are trying our best to do all possible service to our readers. *We shall attempt every month to represent in Prabuddha Bharata the spiritual, international and national aspects of our Ideal.* It is our earnest desire to make *Prabuddha Bharata* a reliable educative institution in India and abroad. In this the Lord help us !

EDITOR. .

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

The great thought of India seeks to realise the spiritual unity of the universe. It does not work itself along the paths of European religious thought which aims at literally "converting" other beliefs, that is to say, at despoiling them of their essence and substituting its own instead. The philosophy of India seeks to enter into all divergent forms of the spirit and, while honouring their individuality, wishes to embrace them all in order to harmonise them in the supreme unity.

The intimate *rapprochement* that has been existing between Europe and India for one century and the influx of European thought into Indian universities and its fascination for Indians, have not resulted in making them renounce to the slightest degree their ancient and vast wisdom, but have only led to the revival of their ardent intellectual curiosity and their genius for metaphysical conquest which enables them to combine foreign ideas into new accords and organise them in their appropriate symphony.

No son of modern India has worked so much, in this sense, as Vivekananda. And his powerful action owed its first

impetus and irresistible *elan* to the intuitive genius of his master Ramakrishna.

It is not possible to describe in a few lines the characteristics of two of the greatest souls whom humanity has crowned with wreaths. I have been engaged in studying them for a fairly long time ; and however difficult it may be for a European, owing to the somewhat tropical luxuriance of these souls and to the abysmal godliness which is in them (especially in that of Ramakrishna), I intend, in a future work, to convey a glimpse of their fascinating beauty.

Here I would like to give only a few essential indications about the personality of Vivekananda and his intellectual constitution. . . .

* . . . * . . . *

Vivekananda* (whose real name was Narendranath Dutt), born in 1863 and prematurely deceased in 1902, came of a distinguished Calcutta family belonging to the Kshatriya caste. Few men have shown, from their childhood onwards, so admirable a harmony of rich and varied gifts, of the body and of the soul. Handsome in appearance, of splendid physique, passionately fond of the arts and the sciences—music, poetry, mathematics, astronomy, Sanskrit and the languages, he enjoyed the benefits of the most liberal education. He read Shelley and Wordsworth, pondered over the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* and Christian religious literature, consumed the historical works of Green and of Gibbon, blazed up in enthusiasm for the French Revolution and Napoleon, studied the philosophy of the West, especially of Kant and of Schopenhauer, and corresponded with Herbert Spencer, astonishing him by his precocious intelligence and daring criticism. And all this, without sacrificing anything of the ground work of his Asiatic culture and Vedantic thought. He sought to interpret Indian philosophy in a new manner in the light of Western methods.

Between his eighteenth and twenty-first year (1881-1884) he underwent a violent intellectual crisis which was rendered more bitter by his father's death and the material embarrassment into which the family found itself plunged. At that time he had, for his guide, Brajendra Nath Seal, his senior in age by a

* This name which means "*The Bliss of Discrimination*" (or "Discernment") had been given to him by Ramakrishna. It designated the ardour of his analytical and critical intellect, as distinguished from the passive acceptance of the other disciples. [The name *Vivekananda* was not given him by Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami assumed this name at the suggestion of the Maharajah of Khetri—Ed. P.B.]

few years, who was later on to bow down in respect before his genius, but who then believed himself to be confident of the possession of Truth and claimed to impart it to him. Brajendra Nath Seal was an Indian rationalist of a particular type, who wished (as he himself said) to fuse together the pure monism of the Vedānta, the dialectics of the Absolute Idea of Hegel and the gospel of the French Revolution,—Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. To him the principle of individuation was evil ; and Universal Reason was everything. The question was how to manifest pure reason : this was the great modern problem and Brajendra thought of solving it through revolution. Vivekananda who had been cast down from his optimistic theism by his perusal of Stuart Mill's *Essays on Religion*, and who was brooding over the problem of evil, was racked by doubts and scorched by passions. His leonine nature wished to clasp everything in one grasp ; and everything excited him. Brajendra's dominating rationalism could satisfy only certain aspects of his intellect ; but he could not circumscribe his gigantic personality within it. For him immanent Reason was not enough ; the Living Revelation, the Realised Absolute was indispensable.

These he found in the prodigious man—we might be tempted to say “fabulous”, if so many witnesses, many of whom are living still, had not made him actual and enabled us as it were to touch him with the hand, and if his teaching, at once familiar and exalted, had not remained for us in the Conversations collected by his auditors,—the simple, unlettered, sublime visionary Ramakrishna. That unique man, through the genius of the heart, achieved the wonder of embracing, one by one, in their totality, all the religions : Hinduism (in all its forms, from the most idolatrous to the most abstract), Islam, Christianity, etc. He “found that it was the same God towards whom all steered their course and that He who is called Krishna is also called Siva, the Primal Energy, Jesus or Allah, one only Rama, having a thousand names. . . .”

Ramakrishna initiated Vivekananda into Advaitist Vedantism, into the realisation of the One Absolute, of the Brahman complete and without divisions, entire. He imparted to Vivekananda what was much more than the evidence for it, —he put him in living contact with it. Vivekananda remained marked with its impress for ever.

Nevertheless, Vivekananda was very different from his master in his entire nature,—in the consuming impetuosity of

his temperament, in the violence of an energy which created more energy just as the wind fans up the fire, in his avid intellect which never knew repose, in the vastness of his knowledge which he augmented unceasingly, and lastly in an inquietude—new amongst the meditative thinkers of India, although Buddha had known it but fled from it—about the ever-gaping wound of universal suffering, of the misery of man, of the poor, of the stricken and even of the criminals (for these are only the afflicted in another sense). This brooding un-easiness—not abstract but vital and ever present—about the suffering of the sacrificed peoples, and first of all of his own, of the people of India, was to direct his action and that of his disciples and of the orders which he founded not less towards the service of others, the service of charity, than towards meditation. And for the first time, I think, in an Indian religious order, the supremacy of meditation was broken. Suffering cannot wait; and for its sake must have to be sacrificed repose and meditative dream and even health (if this was necessary) in order to lighten the universal pain. Let us hearken to his moving appeals:

"Is there none amongst you who can give a life for the service of others? Let the study of the Vedanta and the practice of meditation be left over to the future life. Let this body be consecrated to the service of others! And then I shall know that you have not come to me in vain. . . ."

"May I be born and reborn again and again and suffer a thousand miseries, if only I am able to worship the only God who exists, the only God in whom I believe, the sum-total of all souls, and above all my God the wicked, my God the afflicted, my God the poor of all the races!"

". . . There is no other God to seek after. He alone worships God truly, who serves all the beings."

* * * *

. . . . Ramakrishna died in 1886. Vivekananda organised the disciples into an order. He himself travelled through India on foot as a wandering monk from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin (1889-1893); and it was during this travel that he became conscious both of the misery of his people and of his own mission which was to recreate the indivisible unity, moral and religious, of India. The idea came to him to send out a call to the world for the restoration of this home of the divine life of all humanity. The Parliament of Religions at Chicago (in 1893) gave him the occasion for his first voyage outside

Asia. From his first speeches, this unknown, without resources and without recommendation, loomed forth into prominence and stirred the enthusiasm of his American audiences. He remained in the U. S. A. from June 1893 to August 1895, went to England in the month of August 1895, returned to the U. S. A. in December and founded the *Vedānta Society*, and was back again in London in April 1896. There he cultivated the personal acquaintance of Max Müller. His health had already been much shaken. Some devoted English friends who dedicated themselves thenceforth entirely to his work,—the Seviars— took him to Switzerland in the month of July, 1896. And it was from there that he proceeded along with them to Kiel to meet Paul Deussen. . . .

From London where Paul Deussen accompanied him, Vivekananda returned to India in 1896. And then commenced his mission of glory and of sorrow. In May 1897 was solemnly founded the *Ramakrishna Mission*, one of whose chief aims was the establishment of fraternity amongst the followers of the various religions: "For all are so many forms of one eternal religion."

To-day the Mission has honeycombed all Hindustan with monasteries, homes of service and orphanages. It has, in the Himalayas, an Adwaita Ashrama "for the spiritual meeting of the East and the West." It publishes several excellent journals. It holds itself aloof from all political action but it is one of the densest and most luminous formative nuclei of the great Nebula India.* . . .

"COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN VEDANTISM" †

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

INTRODUCTION

The above-named treatise, a welcome sequel to *The System of Vedāntic Thought and Culture* by the same author, is a critical exposition of the relations in which the various systems of Vedānta philosophy, propounded by Samkara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and Jīva Gosvāmī stand to one

* Translated from the original French by L.V. Ramaswami Aiyar, M.A., B.L.

† *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*. By Dr. Mahendranath Sirker, M.A., PH.D., Professor of Philosophy, Sanskrit College, Calcutta. Oxford University Press, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. 314 pp. Price Rs. 10.

another. Their agreements and divergences in all their essential bearings have been clearly set forth. The whole setting is fully illustrative of the rationale of the different schools which are characterised by two distinct types of thought, transcendentalism and theism. Samkara and his followers, known as the Advaitins, are the advocates of the former, while the Vaisnavas, to which section all the other teachers belong, are the exponents of the latter. The author studies the subjects from the view-points of fundamental metaphysical concepts and brings the vital issues into clear relief. He not only differentiates the Vaisnava theories from one another, indistinguishable as they appear in many respects, and from those of Samkara, but is also careful to note the minor differences among the Samkarites themselves. Comparisons with other philosophic systems of the Hindus and similar views in the West have also been made. A good many writings have hitherto appeared on different systems of Vedânta with attempts at comparison on narrow or wide bases. But a thorough-going comparative treatment of almost all the systems, like the present one, we have not come across heretofore. The author's direct knowledge of the authoritative works on the subjects, as evinced by his frequent references to the original texts, his clear grasp of the abstruse speculations and his graphic presentation of the subtlest ideas with the receptive, critical, and unbiased attitude of a philosopher, through a medium of expression altogether different from the original, are singularly striking.

The one remarkable feature of the Vedânta philosophy is that it is based on the direct experience of the seers. It grows out of an attempt to systematise and rationalise the Vedic truths known as Vedânta—the end of the Vedas, that stood self-revealed to the clarified vision of the perfected souls. These were systematised for the first time by Vyâsa in the form of aphorisms called *Brahma-sûtras* or *Vedânta Darsanam*. The different Vedantic systems are chiefly different interpretations of the *Brahma-sûtras*. Thus in Vedântic thought, as is the case with the Hindu philosophic systems in general, revelations come first and then speculations. The author, therefore, rightly observes in his prefatory remarks that "Vedântism is thus in its initiation a body of intuitions and in its growth a collective system of philosophy."

In the search of truth, Vedântism has more closely followed the lead of psychic experience than discursive reason. The immediacy of psychological facts has greater hold on it than

mediate logical conclusion. This characteristic introspective method of Vedânta should be borne in mind while studying its views. Without some measure of self-introspection on the part of the student, a clear comprehension of the Vedântic truths is not therefore possible. The following observation offers a clue to the study of Vedânta and bespeaks the author's insight into the character of Vedântic thought :

"Vedântism, as a system, has laid more stress upon the psychological revelations, and logic has followed psychology to explain and integrate all the experiences of conscious life. Though the mystic experiences differ, their explanation and systematization differ too, yet none can deny that in Vedântism mysticism has the greater demand than logical systematization. But the trouble is that these mystic intuitions do not offer the same presentations; the appearances widely differ and different schools are anxious to claim some as real and true visions and disclaim others as psychical aberrations. In this way intuition and logic co-operate to establish truth on a humanly convincing basis. Truth in Vedântism should satisfy the claims of logic in the absence of self-contradiction (*âtma virodhasânya*), of metaphysics in the impossibility or inconceivability of a denial (of Being) (*avâdhitavisayatva*), and of psychology in the direct experience. And when these three converge to the same thing, we have, humanly speaking, the truth."

Another fact to be noticed is that in Vedântism the problems of life and its experiences have been viewed from a particular attitude of consciousness. "And in the history of Vedântism two attitudes of knowledge and love have almost become fixed, and the psychological demands have given two types of philosophical concepts and thinking." But neither the allegiance to the Vedas nor the psychological demand to meet the requirement of a particular attitude of consciousness have arrested the free growth of philosophic thought. For, as the author has expressed, "Vedântic teachers have thought in concepts similar to those of Western thinkers, have shown the highest logical acumen and have not been lacking in philosophic boldness in pressing as they do, their conclusions to a logical end." On the other hand, those two elements in Vedântic system have intimately related it to life, so that in Vedântism religion and philosophy stand combined. Vedântic truth is not a mere theoretical idea but an ideal which is to be realised within ourselves as the very substance and fulfilment of our being. The author aptly remarks that "Vedântism, rightly understood, is as much an art of life as a science of thinking, and life ultimately in its fullness of growth embraces truth and finds its meaning and purpose therein."

Realisation of the Self is the one main theme of all schools of Vedānta. The author rightly says :

"Vedāntism is the philosophy of the self-conscious. It is pre-eminently the search for the self. This is undoubtedly true of Advaitism. No less true is it of Vaiṣṇavism. Though Vaiṣṇavism has in it the supreme stress upon God-consciousness, still it cannot ignore that God-consciousness is metaphysically an implication of self-consciousness and psychologically involved in it."

The subject-matter of the book has been arranged under the following heads :—(1) Epistemological Approach, (2) Categories of Existence, (3) Appearance, (4) An Estimate, (5) The Creative Order, (6) Sources of Knowledge, (7) Realisation and Discipline, each forming a separate chapter preceded by a synopsis. The author has very ably dwelt on all these subjects in their several aspects. We may at once state that we have found ourselves in perfect agreement with him in almost all his statements and conclusions. The only review we can present of this book will necessarily be a sort of summary of the main features of the treatise. The most important chapters in the book appear to us to be those on the epistemological and metaphysical views of the different schools. And it is rightly so, for it is from these views that all other aspects of philosophy naturally follow. We mean to briefly dwell on those chapters in the following paragraphs.

KNOWLEDGE AND BEING

The author approaches the subject from the epistemological view-point. The superstructure of each system is raised as it were on its epistemological foundation. The varied conceptions of life and truth arise out of fundamental differences in the theories of knowledge. For the proper understanding of a system as a whole an enquiry into its theory of knowledge is therefore of primal necessity. The idea is thus touched upon by way of preliminary remarks by the author :

"All teachers of Vedāntism make consciousness the supreme fact and ground of all knowledge and experience. The most intimate fact in experience is this consciousness, and the philosophic search must, therefore, begin with a thorough logical determination of knowledge as revealed in our introspective insight and psychical analysis."

Knowledge, according to Saṃkara, is a changeless indeterminate existence. It reveals thought. Its determinate form as thought, acquired through the relativity of subject and object, is the creation of nescience. Pure cogni-

tion transcends the operation of thinking process and is essentially non-relational in character. "It is processless accomplished perception." But to Râmânuja thought-activity with the correlativity of subject and object forms an integral part of cognition. All knowledge, according to him, is determinate by nature. The difference between determinate and indeterminate knowledge is one of degree and not of kind. "When knowledge is not developed in full synthesis, it remains to us as partially determinate. Such a cognition is called indeterminate in the sense that it cannot be seen in its complete connotation and fullness of relation." But the distinction of determinate and indeterminate cognition is accepted by Jîva Gosvâmi, the exponent of the Bengal School of Vaisnavism. The author continues :

"Jîva appears to have attempted a synthesis between the theories of knowledge as held by Samkara and Râmânuja. Samkara denies all qualifications, Râmânuja denies homogeneity of cognition; Jîva accepts both of them as stages involved in the development of synthetic unity or apperception. The indeterminate form is involved in the determinate as its basis; though a clear definition and a consistent conception require a rational synthesis which comes in subsequently as the demand of thought, yet in the immediacy of perception this synthesis is not in direct cognition."

This synthesis however is not real. For, as the author rightly points out, Jîva Gosvâmi's indeterminate knowledge, the homogeneous basis of all relational and unitive consciousness, is not the same as the indeterminate cognition of Samkara, which transcends all relativistic consciousness. The one is "nascent thought", the other "abstract apprehension".

The whole difference between Samkara and the theistic schools is based, as the author has pointed out more than once, on the static and dynamic conceptions of knowledge. The Vedântists of all schools accept Brahman of the Upanisads as the basic reality of the cosmic order. To the static vision of Samkara the Supreme Being is the "homogeneity of consciousness and blissfulness of Existence", exclusive of all determination and qualification. To determine it is to deny its absoluteness. In the dynamic view of the theists, "the Absolute is the synthesis which does not deny qualifications, but, on the other hand, expresses its fullness through the richness of existences. It is the Being of infinite attributes, the Supreme Being of sweetness, goodness and wisdom."

The above definitions of the Absolute as non-qualified and

qualified Being have given rise to keen controversy between the two schools. The challenge thrown by Vyâsâchârya, a follower of Madhva, in his Nyâyâmrita was gallantly accepted by Madhusûdana Sarasvatî, the renowned author of Advaita-siddhi. The fine arguments of the parties on the deepest ontological problems, e.g., Being as intelligence, as self-effulgent, as witness-intelligence and as bliss, have been nicely described by the author. The chief argument of Nyâyâmrita is that the attribution of consciousness and blissfulness to Being is not compatible with its impersonal character as indeterminate existence. To which Advaitasiddhi rejoins that intelligence and bliss do not form the predicates but the very nature of Being. Being is intelligence. "It is a *conscious expression*, rather than an *expressive consciousness*. It is necessarily a witness, a *sâksi*, a *percipi*." Bliss is non-different from consciousness. "The two terms—cit and ânandam—do not denote two things, they have a common reference to an identity." In the Advaita Vedânta Bliss is Being and Self is Bliss. In the theistic Vedânta Bliss is the Infinite Being, and the finite self, atomic in nature, can have the fullness of perpetual delight in fellowship with the Infinite. This is a position which cannot stand strict logic. Neither the conception of svarûpa-sakti as propounded by Jîva Gosvâmi nor Râmânûja's ideal of Brahmasâmyâpatti, equality with Brahman, explains the situation. "And the explanation is not logically possible so long as the least difference between the infinite and the finite is retained."

Being in Samkara is the absolute position. Projection has no place in the transcendence of the Absolute Being. A relation of identity between the position and the projection can be conceived from the empirical standpoint. But philosophically the relation escapes determination. It is mysterious and indefinable. It is a superimposition due to avidyâ. In the unitary dynamic conception of Râmânûja, the processes of self-projection and self-integration build up the endless synthesis in the concrete Being. Samkara's Being is absolute identity. It is positive sameness in every point of existence. Râmânûja's Being is concrete identity and as such has a personality and a character. He institutes a relation of non-difference between substance and attributes to maintain the identity of Being and its attributes. But "non-difference and relation are mutually exclusive concepts". Relation can exist only where there is difference. Even Jîva Gosvâmi's assertion of svarûpa-sambandha—relation of identity between substance and attributes—does

not improve the situation. Svarûpa is essence which cannot be related to itself. The author concludes :

"The attempt to establish a relation between Being and attributes ends in a logical confusion. Either we must say that there is no relation between substance and attributes, or we must accept an outwardness or mediateness in relational concept. Either the attributes resolve themselves into substance or they are illusory. Anything, besides this, forces us to a dualistic position."

REALITY

Having defined the epistemological and the metaphysical settings of the Vedântic thought, the author proceeds to consider its categorical determination of existence. Though transcendently there exists only one self-existent reality according to Advaita Vedânta, yet from the relative standpoint the school of Sankara has accepted the following five categories : —jîva, Isa, the difference between jîva and Isa, avidyâ, the relation of locus, the support and the supported between Brahman and avidyâ. These have no beginning in time and vanish only with the dawn of the knowledge of Brahman. According to the theistic teachers the Absolute is a concrete unity which includes separate finite existences as parts of its being. Absolute dualism has, therefore, no place in Vedântism. The author gives a critical account of the categories as affirmed by each school. Though different enumerations have been made by different teachers, yet all include in their lists the following three as essential :—jîva, prakriti and Brahman, the others being either attributes or relations subsisting in and among them.

It has been rightly observed by the author that none of the theistic philosophers admit any absolute separateness between these categories. Here they are confronted with the great metaphysical problem of assimilating the one and the many.

"Philosophy has either to negate relational consciousness or to posit it in the Absolute. Bradley supposes that in the Absolute the differences, if not completely annulled, are transmuted and fused, but how, he does not know. Hegel and Râmânûja make a unitive synthesis of differences in the Absolute. Bosanquet is nearer to Râmânûja in assimilating the differences in the Absolute as predicates or adjectives. Bradley does not solve the mystery. Râmânûja and Bosanquet cannot give the unity they desire so much. Madhvites are anxious to retain the difference in the Absolute, but finding such a position otherwise untenable institute visesa, the doctrine of specific particulars."

"To avoid pluralism Madhva first establishes an integral whole of existence, in which he introduces visesa. To establish a difference where

there is none or to bring a harmonious adjustment among things of absolute and ineffaceable differences Madhva attributes a mysterious power to God. With this his system justly avoids the appearance of a pluralistic system."

[Would not "just" be more appropriate here than "justly"?]

According to Rāmānuja the finite selves and prakṛiti inhere in the Absolute as its attributes, as moments of its being. His system is rightly styled Viśiṣṭādvaita—"concrete monism". Nimbārka accepts jīva and prakṛiti as dependent reals controlled by Puruṣottama. Puruṣottama is non-different from jīva and prakṛiti as it is immanent in them. It is different in the sense that it transcends them. His system, known as Dvaitādvaita, is "monism with pluralistic countenance". In the Suddhādvaita (pure monism) of Vallabha jīva and prakṛiti seem to be merged in Brahman. "Vallabha differs from Rāmānuja in holding that all apparent differences in being and relation are dissolved in the identity, where jīva attains bliss, inert existence, consciousness and bliss." Jīva Gosvāmī has accentuated the integrity of Being by conceiving jīva and prakṛiti as śaktis of Bhagavān. Svarūpa-śakti, the inner nature of God, supports the tatasthā jīva śakti which again supports the vahirangā māyā śakti. So māyā has no direct touch with Bhagavān. Śakti is neither identical with nor different from the possessor of it. Jīva Gosvāmī calls it the inconceivable relation of identity and difference—*achintyabhedābheda*. According to both Rāmānuja and Jīva Gosvāmī Īśvara is unaffected by the transformation of prakṛiti and the spiritual unfoldment of jīva, though they form an integral part of him.

The author's concluding remarks beautifully clarify the theistic position :

"The theistic philosophers propound the reality of jīva, Īśvara and prakṛiti. They do not materially differ. The formal difference originates in the logical attempt of reconciling these reals in the Absolute. And the Absolute is the divine personality which does not deny, but, on the other hand, accepts finite personalities as complementary to its own existence. The conception of personality at once necessitates the position of separate finite existences, and the understanding of it as divine and absolute immediately requires the inclusion of them in the richness of Infinite life. This implication is present everywhere in Madhva, Nimbārka, Jīva Gosvāmī and Rāmānuja."

APPEARANCE

It has already been noted that Saṃkara assigns a relative existence to the cosmic manifold. It exists in the empiric

knowledge but has no existence in transcendent consciousness. No definite origin can be ascribed to it and it persists till we have the undivided vision of the Infinite. The whole nature, external and internal, is supported in avidyâ. All our sense-perceptions and mental operations from the grossest to the finest are in the domain of mâyâ. The mysterious nature of avidyâ, its twofold function, its different location by Vâchaspati and Vivaranâchârya, the fact of its being revealed by witness-intelligence, and the four divisions of existence by Samkara are explicitly stated with a view to explain the illusory character of the world-appearance after the Samkarites. Those to whom the doctrine of Advaita presents a dualistic countenance because of the position of avidyâ will do well to note the following words of the author :

"The position and negation of avidyâ and its location in Brahman come under conceptual thinking, but Brahman transcends it. And as long as avidyâ is operative, its basis and object are Brahman. It is posited and denied in it, though it is not denied by it. The determinate and indeterminate concepts of Brahman originate with this position and negation of avidyâ in Brahman."

The basic difference between Samkara and Râmânuja lies in the test of truth. Samkara's proof of reality is purely metaphysical. Appearance is no mark of truth. He accepts the positiveness of experience but that does not constitute its truth. It is a fact in knowledge and as such cannot be ignored. It has no permanence and is therefore not true. It is neither real nor unreal. But to Râmânuja every fact of experience is true. Whatever appears or forms the object of consciousness is real. This difference in the test of truth is also evident in their different interpretations of illusory perceptions: the anirvachaniyakhyâti of Samkara, satkhyâti of Râmânuja, the anyathâkhyâti of Madhva and the anyakhyâti of Vallabha.

As to the nature of mâyâ, it is conceived by all schools of Vedânta as the sakti or the creative force of Isvara. In the absolute monism of Samkara, this definition has an empirical or pragmatic significance. It is positive but not eternal. In the transcendence of pure Being, man, nature and God have no existence. But to the theistic teachers mâyâ is positive and eternal and subject to the will of God. It is a power inherent in Isvara and not a mere superimposition on his being. The creative significance of mâyâ is less prominent in Samkara than in the theistic schools. There are Advaitins who deny objective existences and regards the world as transcendental illusion.

To the theistic schools also *mâyâ* has an epistemological significance, as it obscures the spiritual vision of *jîva* and attracts it to the physical plane. Then again, *mâyâ* is the only dynamic principle in *Samkara*. But the theistic teachers conceive, besides *mâyâ*, the "physical-dynamo" immanent in the world of nature, a "spirituo-dynamo" which operates in the supernatural plane of God's self-expression and quickens the creative instinct of *mâyâ* in the beginning of each cycle. According to all teachers of *Vedânta*, *mâyâ* is the material cause and *Isvara* the efficient cause of the creative order. *Mâyâ* as a separate entity is not the cause as it has not an independent existence. The identity of the two causes is thus maintained by all except *Madhava*, to whom *prakriti* has an existence as a real, though subject to *Isvara*.

In whatever form *mâyâ* may be conceived, the great difficulty about it is its inexplicability. *Samkara*'s conception of *mâyâ* has in it a mysteriousness which defies intellectual comprehension. The theistic teachers also have to conceive a mysterious power of God, which subordinates *mâyâ* and renders possible what is apparently impossible. "In both systems," the author observes, "inexplicability somewhere in some form remains." But that does not prove that the theory of *mâyâ* is untenable. It only shows that human reason is helpless beyond a certain limit.

"The rational quest of man tinged with a glow of pride to conquer truth has the rude shock of at last discovering that truth in its nakedness is not revealed in the search. Some mysteriousness, some confusion hangs in the intellectual horizon; the intellectual pursuit ultimately takes rest in humility and submission."

Though the static identity is the only truth according to *Samkara*, he does not sacrifice the popular view of the manifold existence to the philosophic vision of transcendent oneness. Like the *Sruti* he has to interpret, he combines common-sense theological attitude with far-reaching metaphysical insight, and attempts to make a synthesis of causation with identity, the result of which is the celebrated *vivartavâda*, the theory of illusoriness of causation. But in the dynamic unity of the theistic teachers identity and causation have distinct places. The creative manifold is the self-expression of the Absolute. *Parinâmavâda*, the theory of transformation or expression, is the natural outcome of the dynamic conception. A synthetic development of the principle of causality can be traced through the *savikâra parinâmavâda* (theory of mutable transformation) of *Râmânuja*, the *avikâra parinâmavâda* (immutable trans-

formation) of Vallabha and the vivartavâda of Samkara. The true import of the theory of transformation, mutable or immutable, lies in establishing the identity of being in causation. Effectuation is only apparent. It indicates only a change of form, no substantial mutation. Vivartavâda establishes the identity of being by the method of the position and denial of the manifold.

The author thus concludes his discussion of *mâyâ* :

"*Mâyâ* is non-being transcendently and being empirically. It is not therefore the Hegelian becoming, the synthesis of being and non-being. Plato's matter, Sâmkhya's prakriti, and the Vaisnavites' *mâyâ* are positive realities. Samkara's *mâyâ* is posited and consequently denied and does not belong to the same category of being."

The idea of a personal God of unlimited power and capacity is an essential factor of the dynamic concept of Reality. The author gives a philosophic view of the divine personality and of man's union and fellowship with God through love and service in the supersensible world, which form the central theme of the Vaisnava cult. In the life of realisation, the later Vaisnavas, Vallabha and the Bengal school, attach more importance to the enjoyment of divine beauty and sweetness through love and service than the intellectual apprehension of majesty and sublimity ; and the outbursts of love and joy find greater recognition in them than the calm devotional attitude of Râmânija and the meditative quietness of Nîmvârka.

The different theories about *jîva* or finite consciousness have also been considered. To clear the Advaita view references are made to âbhâsavâda, avacchedavâda and prativimvavâda. The Vaisnavas draw no distinction like the Samkarites "between the metaphysical reality and the psychological or epistemological ideality of the self." To them *jîva-âtman* is a dynamic reality, atomic in nature. It has the capacity of expansion and contraction. It is at once a knower, a doer and an enjoyer. So long as *jîva* is in touch with nature, its real concrete spiritual self does not manifest itself and it has an "individualistic, egoistic and differentiating outlook in thought, action and love." But when, freed from the influence of prakriti, it is united to God in love and service, then its functions shine forth in their native purity. The magnifying touch of the Infinite Self expands the vision of the finite self so that it can enjoy the expansive life of the Absolute Consciousness. But its atomicity is still retained.

The theistic conceptions of the Absolute and the finite selves, however, raise some insuperable difficulties. How can

the finite selves, themselves real, be assimilated in the Absolute?

"Rāmānuja's characterization of the finite as an attribute leaves no room for the finite experience and being. Nimbārka's description of the finite beings as dependent reals and Jīva Gosvāmī's description of them as dependent sakti allow a reality to finite selves and admit a difference. It is not easy to assimilate them in the Absolute. The contention of Madhva, that visesa creates bheda where there is none, makes this bheda itself unreal and illusory and the being integral."

Again :

"Nowhere in the theistic thought do we come across a satisfactory solution of the relation of nature to God. How the divine influence can act upon māyā is not logically explained. The influence has been merely assumed in the subordination of māyā to Isvara and in the conception of Isvara's inconceivable power the theological attitude finds the convincing explanation."

Nor do we find the theistic conception of the relation of jīva and prakṛiti convincing :

"To begin with pre-existent finite selves and to have a history of evolution of these souls in association with prakṛiti and then to urge their final emancipation in dissociation from prakṛiti seems to be a hopeless confusion of thought."

The double relation of finite selves to Brahman and prakṛiti is also proved to be an impossibility. The author, however, does not advance direct arguments to refute the atomicity and the plurality of the finite selves.

CONCLUSION

A rapid survey of this excellent resumé of the different aspects of Vedāntic thought impresses us with the feeling that the author has represented the varied theories and arguments in their true colours with veracity and sober judgment resulting from a sound knowledge of the subject. The book is so full of information that it has been impossible for us to acquaint the readers even with a part of it through this very brief summary. We have only touched upon certain aspects of the book. The last three chapters on the "The Creative Order," "Sources of Knowledge" and "Realisation and Discipline" have been left unnoticed for lack of space. We have already mentioned that we are in full agreement with the author on almost all points. One of his views expressed in more than one place does not appear to us to have any authoritative basis. In his account of creative evolution in Advaita Vedānta, in the chapter on Creative Order the author observes :

"Sāṃkhya Vedāntism does not draw, like Rāmānuja, any absolute distinction between jīva and Isvara. It is properly a distinction of

upādhi and not like the theists, a distinction of Being or reality. And the distinction of the upādhi is not an eternal distinction and can be with an effort set aside; for what after all constitutes the upādhi of jīva and Isvara is the same māyā and its modification."

Then again in the chapter on Realisation and Discipline, he states :

"When the consciousness in jīva through discrimination and dissociation comes to feel its being as the object as well as the locus of avidyā, it has its jīvahood replaced by Isvarahood. And the limitation of being and consciousness is replaced by an expansion of being and knowledge."

We do not think that the school of Samkara holds, as the author seems to imply, that there is a possibility of jīva attaining Isvarahood by an evolution of upādhi. In his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* iv. 1. 3, Samkara admits that the scriptures aim at teaching that jīva freed from the samsāra state is non-different from Isvara. But the trend of the commentary clearly shows that the identity is implied not with Isvara, the Lord of the universe, but with Brahman, the Absolute Being. Vāchaspati and Anandagiri while explaining the passage use the words *Paramātman* and *Brahman* respectively instead of *Isvara*. That jīva cannot attain perfect equality with Isvara through meditation has been maintained by Samkara in his commentary on the *sūtras* iv. 4. 17—21.

The fact that liberated souls become one with Brahman and not with Isvara is asserted by all the Samkarites except *Vivaranakāra* who opines that *prativimva* (jīva, the reflected self) is identified with *vimva* (Isvara, the object of reflection) on the destruction of *avidyā*. But here the selfsame *ajnāna* being the upādhi of both, *vimvatva* and *prativimvatva* are correlative, so when *ajnāna* is destroyed, nothing but the Absolute Being remains. Thus the identity is actually established with Brahman and not with Isvara.

We shall mention another point which has struck us. In discussing the sources of knowledge the author does not mention the *Purānas*. The author might have added a few words to explain the attitude of the *Vaisnavas* towards the *Purānas* as sources of knowledge. Do they include them in the *savda-pramāna*? They seem to attach as much importance to the *Purānas* as to the *Vedas*. They do not, as far as we know, doubt their authority or wait to see that their teachings conform to those of the *Vedas*. The *Bhāgavatam* is held by the Bengal school of *Vaisnavism* in as much reverence, if not more, as the *Vedas*. They call it *srutisāra*, the essence of the *Vedas*.

One point more. In the chapter on Realisation and Discipline, while speaking of realisation through upâsanâ in Advaita sâdhanâ, the author remarks :

"The Jîva-consciousness, its limitation and restricted life are replaced by the Isvara-consciousness and its expansive and free life. The dominated consciousness is now the dominating consciousness. Mâyâ no longer controls. But the Vedântic transcendence is not yet reached. . . The transcendence is reached when the locus consciousness realises its difference from the energizing mâyâ. . . . An indifferent witnessing state soon brings in the consummation."

Is krama mukti (gradual emancipation) or sadya mukti (immediate emancipation) implied here? The meditation of saguna Brahman (personal Being) generally leads to krama mukti. There is a possibility of sadya mukti in the meditation of nirguna Brahman (impersonal Being). The results of the two seem to have been combined by the author.

The book presents in a condensed form the most valuable ideas of Vedântic philosophy in a style calm, grave and expressive and peculiarly suited to philosophical disquisition. The author has used the Vedântic terms as sparingly as possible and represented the abstruse thoughts in elegant English philosophical expressions. Though it makes the book no tedious reading for English scholars interested in the subject, yet it will cause some difficulty to those who are accustomed to think in Vedântic terms. A full glossary and bibliography would have saved much trouble and made the work accessible to a wider circle of Vedântic students. Yet it is no small credit to the author's power of delineation that he has made the subject quite comprehensible to advanced scholars for whom the book is evidently meant. We congratulate the author on his excellent performance and hope that in future he will further advance the cause of Vedânta by writing separate treatises on the different aspects of Vedântism in a manner suited to a wider circle of readers.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1914

Only three days following the celebration of the natal day of the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who could have foretold the events of this Sunday after Christmas? The day

dawned fair and beautiful and all went forward as usual in the preparations for the morning, afternoon and evening services. But all was not as usual. This was the chosen day on which a great life was to be laid down as a vicarious sacrifice. Such great souls are born into this world with a definite purpose—the uplift of humanity. As their motives are selfless, their lives become one consuming desire to help other souls along the path to realization.

They are the children of the Mother and always under Her special care—for will She not care for those who have given themselves utterly to serve as channels for Her will? Nothing is accidental in their lives. They are born for the service of humanity; their life is subject constantly to the will of the Mother and She determines the manner and the time of their end.

Not one among those who came to the lecture on this Sunday afternoon had the slightest idea that this was the hour chosen for the beginning of the end and that the instrument appointed was at hand. Jesus knew as the fateful hour approached that one of those who had been nourished at his bosom and who had lived in the light of his presence had been chosen to be the means by which he was to be betrayed to those who conspired against him. So, also, one who had been a disciple and lived in the monastery, to whom Swami again and again had given loving help, sympathy and spiritual counsel in moments of mental storm and torturing doubts, was chosen as the means by which Swami was to pass out of his earthly temple.

This young man was subject to frequent fits of depression giving evidence at times of an unbalanced mind. In one of these fits of depression he left the monastery and was absent for a long period. During this time away from the beneficent influence of Swami, his mind became more and more unsettled until he conceived the idea of destruction. Possessed by this thought, he secreted a bomb and brought it with him to the service on this memorable Sunday afternoon, and before anyone could prevent, threw the bomb on the platform where Swami was standing. There was an immediate explosion and a cloud of dense blue smoke obscured the platform. Fortunately no lives were lost except that of the would be destroyer who received in his own person the major contents of his own bomb, but the auditorium was greatly damaged and Swami

received such injuries as necessitated his removal to the Affiliated Colleges Hospital.

Admission to this special hospital was arranged for by one of the members and another member provided the means for a private room. Here loving hands attended his needs and everything possible was done to relieve the suffering caused by the wounds.

On his way to the hospital Swami said, "Where is—X—, poor fellow?" In the midst of excruciating pain his mind was yet filled with pity that anyone should do such a rash act.

A number of the devotees visited Swami daily and reported his progress to the Temple. A man nurse was put in permanent charge as Swami was heavy to lift and he had to be moved very carefully. Although medical skill did all it could, the shattered condition of Swami's constitution, for years ready to disintegrate, was such that the system could not resist the infection from the wounds. Although every waking moment was one of intense suffering, no word of complaint ever passed his lips. From time to time, he gave instructions to one disciple after another to be faithful to the cause to the end and, even to the last, his thoughts were never for himself but for the Master's work and mission.

On the afternoon of January 9th, Swami aroused himself out of his apparently unconscious state and held conversation with the young man disciple in charge relative to the young man's spiritual condition, and at the same time told him that he would leave his body the next day, January 10th, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. Just before 7-30 p.m. on January 10th, the young man was called out of the room for a few minutes and when he returned, Swami had already left the body for that plane from which he had been attracted to earth by his Master to take up the work of the salvation of humanity.

Thus, alone in a strange land, far from the sacred soil of India, without the presence or ministrations of the brotherhood, with only the All-seeing Eye as a witness, he passed out of the body which in death was offered as the last possible act in the long years of sacrifice, and entered into Mahasamadhi.

The news of Swami's death was received at 7-45 P.M. with great consternation and sorrow by all the students, and after a brief meeting it was decided to cremate Swami's body according to his wishes at Cypress Lawn Cemetery.

The memorial services were held on January 14th in the

little chapel of the undertaking establishment and were attended by a large number of disciples and friends. Mr. Petersen, the president of the Society, who was greatly esteemed by Swami, gave the address. Every available space in the room was banked with lovely flowers sent from many loving hearts. Women disciples chanted and sang beautiful songs and others read appropriate passages from Scripture.

As the words of the address and the hymns and chants with their heavenly vibrations fell upon the ears of the sorrowing students, they recalled the unfailing willingness of Swami to sacrifice himself for others, and, his great power for character-building, exemplified in the lives of those present in greater or less degree. They resolved to show their love for him by carrying out his principles and teachings in their daily lives so that every one might become a living monument to his memory.

After the close of the service, the usual invitation was given to all who desired to do so to take their final look upon the face of him whom they loved and who had served them so lovingly in the name of his Master and who had sealed that service with his life. It seemed impossible to believe that their Swami had really left them and would return in the flesh no more. A loving smile lay upon his lips and his face still shone with the reflection from the beatific state in which by the grace of the Divine Mother his spirit had been merged at the time of dissolution. Many gave way to their grief unrestrainedly, while others felt that he would always be with them, that they were a part of him and could never for a moment be separated from him in Spirit.

When all had taken their farewell, the lid was sealed and the casket was carried out to the waiting hearse by the young men whom Swami had trained and loved for so many years, the monks from the Temple monastery.

At the conclusion of the services in the undertaking parlors, the devotees and friends followed the remains to the beautiful grounds at Cypress Lawn Cemetery (present Cypress Lawn Memorial Park). Here again the women chanted and sang and the final words of farewell were spoken ; after which the casket was lowered to the cremation room and those who accompanied it saw, through the heatproof glass door of the furnace, the intense heat of the flames consume the casket which contained all that was mortal of him who was Swami Irigunatita. It seemed that even the elements were in

sympathy with the general grief, for the heavens poured forth a deluge and the wind blew a terrific gale.

The eventful day came to a close—a day fraught with much meaning to the Western world, for it marked the sacrifice for the West of the life of one of the spiritual sons of Ramakrishna, his blood the seed from which thousands yet unborn might be blessed with a knowledge of the truth as given by his Master.*

PILGRIMAGE WITH SWAMI'S ASHES

In the year 1916, on the thirteenth day of the month of April, when the wild flowers cover the Shanti Ashrama in riotous profusion, a little band of devotees led by Swami Prakashananda left for the Shanti Ashrama, carrying with them the hallowed ashes of their beloved teacher.

What emotions filled their hearts as they passed through the gate of that blessed spot! Recollection of the hours of instruction they had received there flooded their minds and overflowed in their feelings.

So it was in the full spirit of devotion that they carried out the purpose of their pilgrimage, to leave all that remained of Swami in the place which had occupied so much of his loving thought and plans, which had already been sanctified by his life and that of Swami Turiyananda, and now with his ashes, would be holier forever, for all who would come in future years to seek in this solitude, peace for their weary souls. Up the winding path, which Swami had often trod, to the top of the highest hill, the holy Siddha Giri, the "Hill of Realization," the ashes were carried by the pilgrims. After an inspired and heart-touching tribute to Swami by Swami Prakashananda and with a few simple rites, the ashes were interred beneath the northern point of the large earthen triangle on which the sacred Dhuni ceremony had often been held.

That night the full moon also added her benediction, shedding her silvery rays over the newly turned earth in memory of one to whom all nature was the face of the Divine.

Tall pine trees stand like sentinels over the triangle, overlooking the long stretch of the beautiful valley below, while

* A few days prior to his passing, Swami Trigunatita requested Mrs. Petersen to tell the students that the Temple should be restored and the work carried on. Accordingly Mrs. Petersen collected the funds and his wishes were carried out. Under instructions from Belur Math Swami Prakashananda took charge of the work.

the flowers carpet the hillsides around in spring with the magical touch of Nature in her most charming mood, and the gentle breeze of summer and the storms of winter tell of the love of the Mother for Her son.

Thus passed a great soul whose life was devoted to the spiritual unfoldment of many—a great Yogi, and the servant of all.

Though the ashes alone remain as a mute symbol of the vanished form, the spirit that animated them will never die. Its influence will be shown in the lives of the students, the affairs of the Temple and the life of the Western world. Those who were of his time were too close to grasp the significance of a life in which every thought and act were regulated by the all-inclusive requirements of Sannyasa as laid down in the Hindu Scriptures. Like one of the heroic figures of Vedic history, his figure will loom larger and larger as time rolls on and the perceptions of his followers deepen and widen. Undeviatingly holding aloft the ideal of the realisation of the Absolute as the goal of humanity, he lived the One, he taught the One, but he was also a great devotee.

As a character-builder, he knew the force of a living example. What disciple could question the validity of the teaching embodied in the life of asceticism lived daily before him? No demand on his time or energy was ever disregarded—no appeal however trifling was ignored. His mind was a deep well of wisdom unfathomable to the ordinary intellect and every day was a new revelation of the manysidedness of his unique individuality.

Like some high mountain torrent the never failing waters of which press their course resistlessly to the sea, Swami Trigunatita never rested from his purpose: his energy to accomplish the thing he had set himself to do was tireless and tremendous. "Endure to the end" was the living maxim placed before all disciples. He used to say, "Some will understand the motives behind my actions in five years, some in ten years, some in fifteen, others never."

Those to whom he imparted the truths of his own realization and to whom he bequeathed the legacy of service in the cause for which he lived and died, have accepted the trust and will give their lives if need be to carry on the same world-embracing cause of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna.

[Finish]

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES

(Continued from the last issue)

The relations of Sri Ramakrishna with his devotees were always full of love and blessing. Here is the story of a devoted couple, as narrated by the wife :

"For a long time my husband (Navagopal Ghose) has been searching for a *Sadhu* who could tell him how to realize God. He had begun to follow the instructions of one, when a friend said : 'Why do you waste your time on this man? Go to Dakshineswar ; there you will find a *Paramahansa* who will be able to clear all your doubts.' So one Sunday my husband and I went to Dakshineswar and saw Sri Ramakrishna. He received us most kindly and at once I felt that he was divine.

"For three years we did not return. My husband was practising certain *Sadhanas* (spiritual exercises) and he felt that he must finish them before he went to another teacher. Suddenly one day Thakur said to a visitor at the Temple : 'Some three years ago a man by the name of Navagopal Ghose came to see me with his wife. He has never been back since. Tell him I would like to see him.' After all those three years he recalled the name ; and it was just at the moment when my husband had finished the *Sadhanas* that he sent for us. We went to him the following Sunday and from that time we went regularly every Sunday, going at ten in the morning and staying until ten at night."

A profound love for the Master became the governing force of Navagopal's life. It gave him keenest joy even to hear the Master's name and if a little boy in the street shouted it, he would throw him a coin. Soon the urchins realized this and as Navagopal walked each morning to his bath in the Ganges, a crowd of them would dance round him shouting at the top of their shrill little voices : "Jay Ramakrishna !" "Jay Ramakrishna !" "Jay Ramakrishna !" In reply he would scatter copper coins by handfuls.

The wife too was an ardent devotee. She herself related many incidents of her association with the Master : "When I would come he would send all the gentlemen out and remain talking with me alone. Once he asked me why I came, what I found in him to draw me so often to Dakshineswar. I replied : 'I cannot say. All I know is that that which made Prahlada forget his father, and Dhruva and others forget their parents, this I find here.'

"At Cossipore Garden he asked me again why I came to

him. 'You have children, you have jewels and furniture. What then do you want in coming to me?' I replied: 'I do not want all these things. I come because I love you, because I want you. I want your blessing.' At once he went into *Samadhi* and as he came out of it he put his hand on my head and blessed me.

"A friend had told me I should make *Haribol* (repeat the name of the Lord) and I did so. But it caused great perplexity in my mind. 'Here I am calling upon Hari (a name of the Lord),' I said to myself, 'and yet I am told that one should seek salvation through the *Guru* (spiritual teacher) alone.' I went to Dakshineswar to see Sri Ramakrishna but before I could explain my trouble, he said to me: 'Guru and Hari are one.' "

There were other disciples. Of Bhavanath, Sasi said: "Bhavanath was one of those whom Gurumaharaj spoke of as 'born perfect.' He also said that he and Narendra were affinities. But Bhavanath married. One day Gurumaharaj told me to go to him, saying I could learn much from him. I wondered why he should send me to a householder to learn; but when I saw Bhavanath I understood. As we sat talking of God, he went into meditation and tears of bliss and devotion poured down his cheeks. One could see that he was completely immersed in God."

There was another disciple, Girish Chandra Ghose. He said of the Master: "He who has enabled me to cross over the sea of this world and the no less terrible sea of scepticism, how can I repay or serve him? There is nothing in him I cannot worship. . . . If I had known I was going to have such a wonderful *Guru* (spiritual teacher) I would have been even more wicked than I was, just for the joy of being forgiven. Sri Ramakrishna was like an indulgent mother to me always. He scolded his disciples sometimes, but he never scolded me. He came frequently to my house and was unfailing in his love towards me." Sri Ramakrishna also said of him: "Girish's faith is like a rock, it cannot be overturned. It is rare in this world to find a man with such a faith."

Girish Chandra Ghose once thought that he would shock Sri Ramakrishna by singing a verse from an indecent song. It was in the early rebellious days of their association. Sri Ramakrishna smiled and with twinkling eyes sang an equally lawless verse. At once, Girish Babu felt like a silly boy trying to be funny. This manner of meeting attack was characteristic of Sri Ramakrishna.

Sasi said: "Religion as Sri Ramakrishna taught it was never vague or dismal. It went to the man where he was and lifted him up. It was not like an eagle which soars high in the air and calls to the tortoise, 'Come up here.' Can the tortoise ever hope to rise to the eagle? No, it can only say, 'If you will come and lift me up, then I can go up there.' So Sri Ramakrishna in his teaching came down and carried the man up by degrees. It gave him new hope and courage.

"Sri Ramakrishna never preached. If he went anywhere it was to be among good men and be blessed by their holy association. That was his idea. But when he was there Divine Mother would rise up in him and he would begin to talk. It mattered not whether there were few listeners or many." . . .

"He practised *Pranayama* (breath control) so much that he formed a habit of remaining for long periods without breathing," the disciple Sasi said. "Now and then he would stop breathing entirely. Even after we came to him, he used to tell us: 'Whenever you see that I am not breathing, please remind me.' Sometimes when he was sleeping, we would see that the breath has stopped, then we would wake him up and tell him: 'Master, you are not breathing.' 'Oh, thank you!' he would say and again begin to breathe."

Not hours, but whole days and nights were spent in continuous meditation. Some one asked the disciple Sasi if his Master had not remained once for three days wholly unconscious of outer things. His reply was:

"Three days? For twelve years. Through that time he did not know when the sun rose or when it set; he did not know whether he had taken food or not. Occasionally when a moment's consciousness would come, he would feel as if some one was dwelling inside and he would ask: 'Who are you? Why are you here?' So completely had the Mother possessed him!

"His body was especially manufactured to stand the shock of these manifestations. It was not an ordinary body. He used to say: 'If one-millionth part of the emotion I feel should come to an ordinary man, his body would break to pieces; just as when a mad bull gets into a garden, it tears and uproots everything there.' He would compare his religious devotion to a mad elephant.

During his last illness Sri Ramakrishna was taken at last to the Cossipore Garden House to live there under medical treatment.** Many of the young disciples lived at Cossipore with the Master to serve him; other disciples came and went. By

degrees each was given special duties. Holy Mother prepared the Master's meals and carried them to him. Two of the boys went to the bazar and did the marketing. The other boys watched beside the Master and attended to his needs. They took turns each one remaining for six hours at a time.

One night near the close, the disciple Sasi was watching. There was a chill in the air. Sri Ramakrishna rose from his bed. Sasi who was sitting by his door came in quickly and began to scold ; but Sri Ramakrishna reached feebly for his dressing gown and gave it to Sasi, saying : "I want you to have it." Sasi took it reluctantly ; then not feeling that he was worthy to keep it, gave it to Rakhal, who lost it while on pilgrimage.

Why was Sri Ramakrishna ill? He himself said that it was because of his taking the sufferings of others on himself. But he did not regret it. When one pleaded with him not to endanger his health any more by such vicarious atonement, he exclaimed : "I would gladly give twenty thousand bodies to save one soul!"

At last the fateful hour came. Let the story of the last hours in that upper room be told by the disciple Sasi who lived through them :

"We all thought the Master was better because he ate so much more supper than usual, and he said nothing of going. In the afternoon he had asked Yogin to look in the almanac and see whether it was an auspicious day. Also he had been telling us for some time that the vessel which was floating in the ocean was already two-thirds full of water, soon the rest would fill up and it would plunge into the ocean. But we did not believe that he was really going. He never seemed to mind the pain. He never lost his cheerfulness. He used to say he was all well and happy, only there was a little something here (pointing to the throat). 'Within me are two persons,' he would declare. 'One is the Divine Mother, the other is Her devotee. It is the devotee that has been taken ill.'

"When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his body I think it was the most blissful moment of his life. A thrill of joy ran through him. I myself saw it. I remember every incident of that last day. Our Master seemed very well and cheerful. In the afternoon he talked for fully two hours to a gentleman who had come to put him some questions about Yoga. A little later I ran some seven miles to bring the doctor. When I reached the doctor's house he was not there ; but I was told he was at a certain place, so I ran another mile and met him on the way.

He had an engagement and said he could not come, but I dragged him away just the same.

"On that last night Ramakrishna was talking with us to the very last. For supper he had drunk a whole half-glass of *Payasam* (gruel) and seemed to relish it. There was no doubt a little heat in the body, so he asked us to fan him and some ten of us were all fanning at once. He was sitting up against five or six pillows which were supported by my body and at the same time I too was fanning. This made a slight motion and twice he asked me: 'Why are you shaking?' It was as if his mind was so fixed and steady that he could perceive the least motion. Narendra took his feet and began to rub them and Ramakrishna was talking to him, telling what he must do. 'Take care of these boys,' he repeated again and again, as if he was putting them in Naren's charge. Then he asked to lie down.

"Suddenly at one o'clock he fell towards one side, there was a low sound in the throat and I saw all the hairs of his body stand on end. Narendra quickly laid his feet on a quilt and ran downstairs as if he could not bear it. A doctor, who was a great devotee and who was feeling his pulse, saw that it had stopped and began to weep aloud. 'What are you doing?' I asked, impatient with him for acting as if the Master had really left us.

"We all believed that it was only *Samadhi*, so Naren came back and we sat down, some twenty of us, and began repeating all together: 'Hari Om! Hari Om!' In this way we waited until between one and two the next day. Still the body had some heat in it, especially about the back, but the doctor insisted that the soul had left it. About five the body had grown cold, so we placed it on a cot, covered with garlands and carried it to the burning ghat."

A large horizontal tablet on a high rectangular base now marks the spot beside the Ganges where Sri Ramakrishna's body was cremated. . . . When at the appointed time, Holy Mother was removing her bracelets and exchanging her wifely *Sari* for the plain white unbordered cloth of the widow, it is said that Sri Ramakrishna appeared before her and asked reproachfully: "What are you doing? I have not gone away." In penitent salutation Holy Mother clasped her hands and bowed her head, then silently she put back her bangles and her bordered *Sari*.

(Concluded)

THE LATE LALA LAJPAT RAI

It is with deep sorrow that we have to record the sudden passing of Lala Lajpat Rai on the 17th November in his house at Lahore. We are told by his son and family doctors that Lalaji had been feeling weak and complaining of exhaustion since the unfortunate police assault on him on the occasion of the arrival of the Simon Commission at Lahore. On the night of the 16th, he complained of a pain all over the body, especially in the right side chest and in the back near the spine. The pain continued through the night. Next morning, he suddenly expired from heart-failure at about 6-45. Lalaji, it is said, had often expressed the wish of dying thus in harness: he wanted to serve his motherland to the last.

Lala Lajpat Rai was born in 1865 in the Ludhiana District of the Punjab, passed his Law Examination in 1885 and settled down to legal practice in which he soon achieved considerable success. His innate greatness, however, led him also to more disinterested fields of work. He joined the Arya Samaj movement, became one of its foremost workers and helped in founding the D. A. V. College of Lahore, of which he was Vice-President and Secretary for many years. He worked for the removal of untouchability and elevation of the depressed classes, and organised relief activities on various occasions of distress. By that time he had entered into politics and was sent to England as a fellow delegate with Mr. Gokhale in 1905 to represent Indian conditions to the people of England. He took the opportunity of travelling also in Europe and America at that time. The experience of this wide travel stood him in good stead in his subsequent career.

During the Swadeshi movement, he became one of its prominent leaders and was deported by the Government in 1907 to Mandalay. He was, however, soon released. In 1914, he again went to America where he had to live for about six years, being refused permission by the government to return to India. This period was a fruitful one for him and India. He started a paper there, called *Young India*, to acquaint the American public with the real conditions in India. He also wrote valuable books on India and America.

After his return to India in 1920, he presided over the Calcutta session of the I. N. Congress of that year. He soon joined the Non-co-operation movement and suffered imprisonment for political offence in the beginning of 1922. Mere non-co-operation was not suited to his positive nature, and during

the last few years, he became more and more realistic in his political views. He became a staunch advocate of the Dominion status for India. He was also a prominent member of the Hindu Mahasabha and presided over its Calcutta session in 1925.

Lalaji was, besides being a great political worker and patriot, also a great scholar, speaker, and writer. Of his many books in Urdu and English, the last, *Unhappy India*, was published a few months ago, was the ablest and most brilliant reply to that mischievous book of Miss Mayo—*Mother India*. His weekly—*People*, has also earned considerable reputation.

He was a bold fighter and a man of large heart. His last great gift in memory of his mother for the establishment of a Tuberculosis Hospital for women, must still be fresh in the memory of our readers. He had established a society, called the Servant of People Society, to which also he had some of his properties.

Lalaji lived for 63 years. All his life he had served the country in one form or another. As a reformer, journalist, author, traveller, politician and patriot his one great passion was the upliftment of the Indian nation, the freedom of India. Lalaji's great services to the motherland will remain immortal in the history of India, and his sincerity, earnestness, unflagging zeal, courage and untired fighting spirit will remain as models to the future generations. It will take a long time before the gap he has left behind in our public life, can be adequately filled up.

We offer our sincere condolence to his bereaved family. May the departed spirit attain Eternal Peace!

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Mission Sevashram, Benares

The Report for the year 1927 of the Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares, presents as usual an interesting account of work done. The Home contains 108 beds in its Indoor Hospital and 1720 new cases were admitted into it during the year. The total number of surgical cases was 183. 23,267 new cases attended the Outdoor Dispensary, of which 624 were operation cases. The workers of the Home searched out 369 cases of extreme suffering in the city during the year and brought them to the Home for treatment.

Besides the above works of service, the Home has also a Refuge for Aged Men Invalids, a Refuge for Women Invalids, a Girl's Home in which 7 girls are living under a Lady Superintendent and receiving education, a Home for Paralytic Patients, a Dharmasala for Poor

Strangers, Outdoor Help to Invalids and Poor Ladies of Respectable families and special and occasional Relief to attend to. All these works also are being properly done.

The total income during the year was Rs. 34,644-0-½ and total expenditure Rs. 33,803-13-5½.

The Home is in urgent need of Rs. 50,000 for the construction of a separate Women's Ward. The necessary land has been acquired, and also some money towards the cost of building. But Rs. 50,000 have still to be procured. Kind-hearted ladies and gentlemen may send their contributions to *Hon. Asst. Secy., R. K. Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Benares City, U. P.*

Charitable Dispensary, Shyamala Tal

Shyamala Tal is situated in an out of the way place in the Himalayas, where the poor hill people had to go almost without any medical treatment. To remove this great want, a Charitable Dispensary was opened in 1914 and since then it has been carrying on its work of service. Up to the end of 1927, 7,524 cases have been treated in the Dispensary, the number of cases treated during the year 1927 being 1,036 of which 15 were admitted into the Indoor Hospital.

The Indoor Hospital is not yet properly organised mainly owing to financial wants. Rs. 2,000 are needed to buy a piece of land with an old building on, which can be repaired and remodelled into a convenient house for both the Indoor Hospital and Outdoor Dispensary. Contributions may be sent to *Swami Virajananda, Secy., Charitable Dispensary, C/o. The Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal, P.O. Dcori, via Champawat, Dt. Almora, U.P.*

Ramkrishna Mission Balurghat and Bankura Famine Relief Work closed

Owing to the prospect of favourable crops in Bankura and Balurghat we have stopped our relief activities from the third week of November. We therefore beg to inform the public that no further monetary help is required by us now for these areas. We gratefully offer our heart-felt thanks to all who have helped us in cash or kind for conducting the work. A statement of account of the relief work will be shortly published.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,
Secy., R. K. Mission,





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